

PC

PowerPlay

PC GAMES & TECHNOLOGY. 100% AUSTRALIAN



FIRST HANDS-ON TEST REPORT

QUAKE 3: ARENA



The Big One

GAMES REVIEWED:

REQUIEM • CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 3
LANDS OF LORE 3 • WARZONE 2100
GTA LONDON • MACHINES • DESCENT 3

ON THE CD



KINGPIN

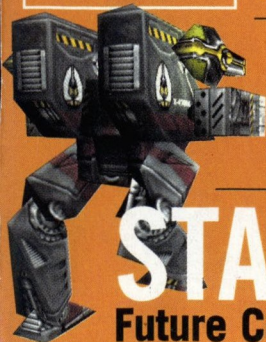
HEROES OF MIGHT & MAGIC 3, ROLLCAGE, STARSIEGE
NO CD? PLEASE ASK YOUR NEWSAGENT

ROLLCAGE

3D Race Action

STARSIEGE

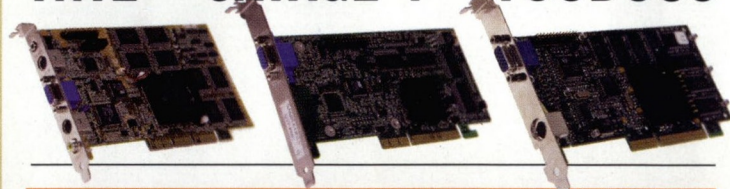
Future Combat



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DREAM 3D GRAPHICS BREAKTHROUGH

TNT2 • SAVAGE 4 • VOOODOO3



GAMER'S MICE

1GHz-Now!

Kryotech's 1000MHz PC

FALCON 4.0 TACTICS

SAM and AAA Evasion

AMD K-7

Gamer's Super CPU

ISSUE 38
JULY 1999
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next
gaming



38



Prepare to immerse yourself in the epic adventure that is *The Phantom Menace*.

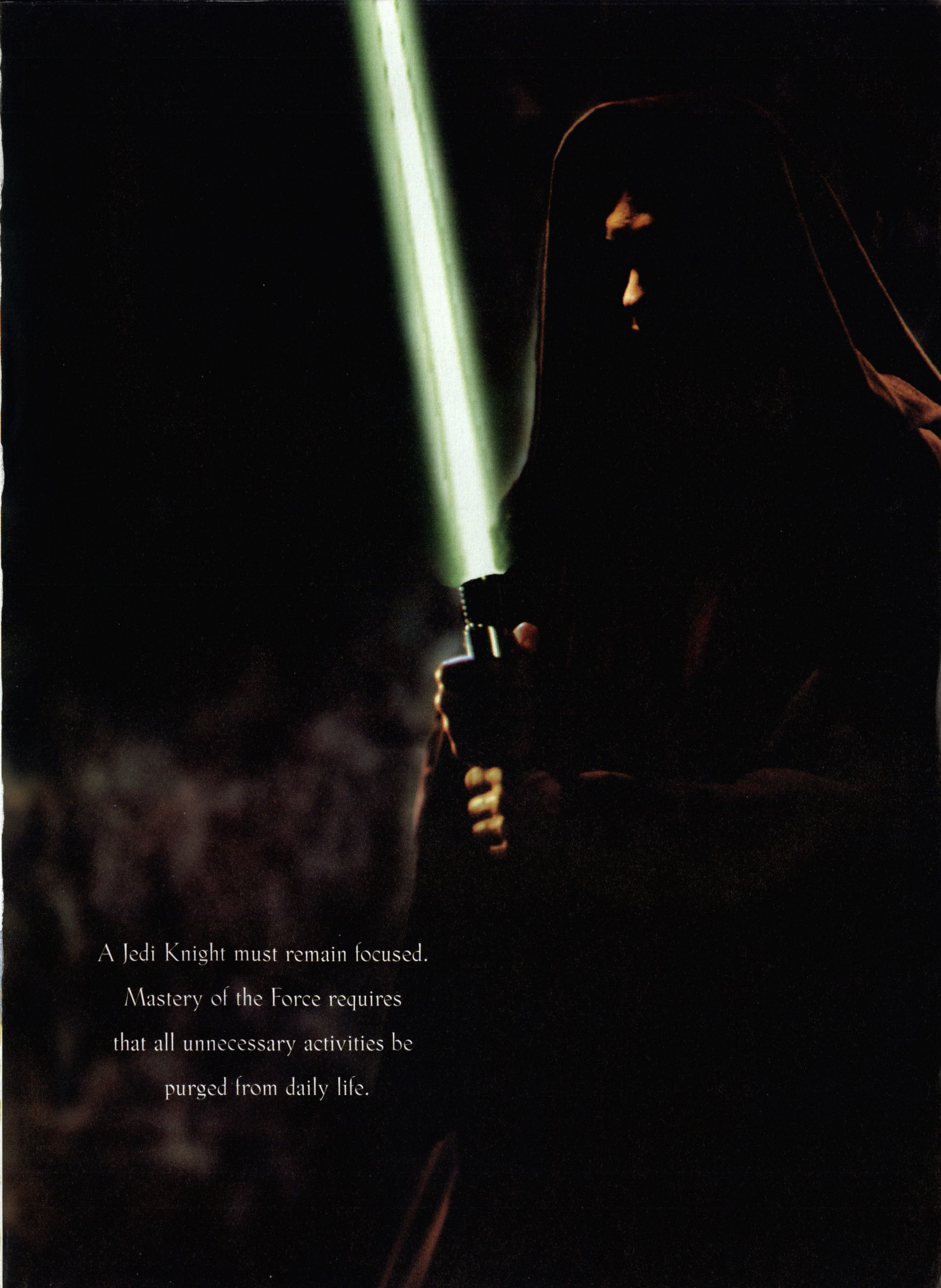
As the central character, you will journey to all the stunning locations of Episode I, where you are destined to play a decisive role in every key event. All-consuming? Yes. But then, there's no such thing as a part-time Jedi.



www.lucasarts.com/products/phantommenace

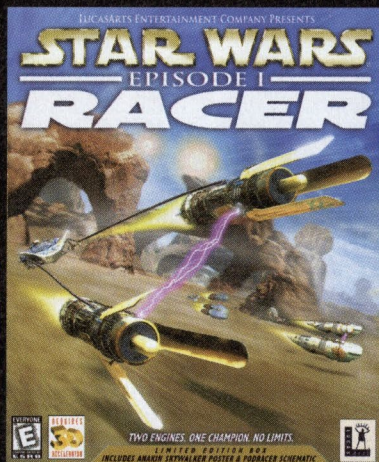
www.starwars.com

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3D accelerator hardware required for PC version.
Exclusively manufactured and distributed by Metro Games • www.metrogames.com.au

A close-up, low-key photograph of a Jedi Knight. The figure is wearing a dark, hooded robe, with only their eyes and part of their face visible in the shadows. They are holding a glowing green lightsaber, which is the primary light source in the scene. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an indoor setting with some architectural details.

A Jedi Knight must remain focused.

Mastery of the Force requires
that all unnecessary activities be
purged from daily life.

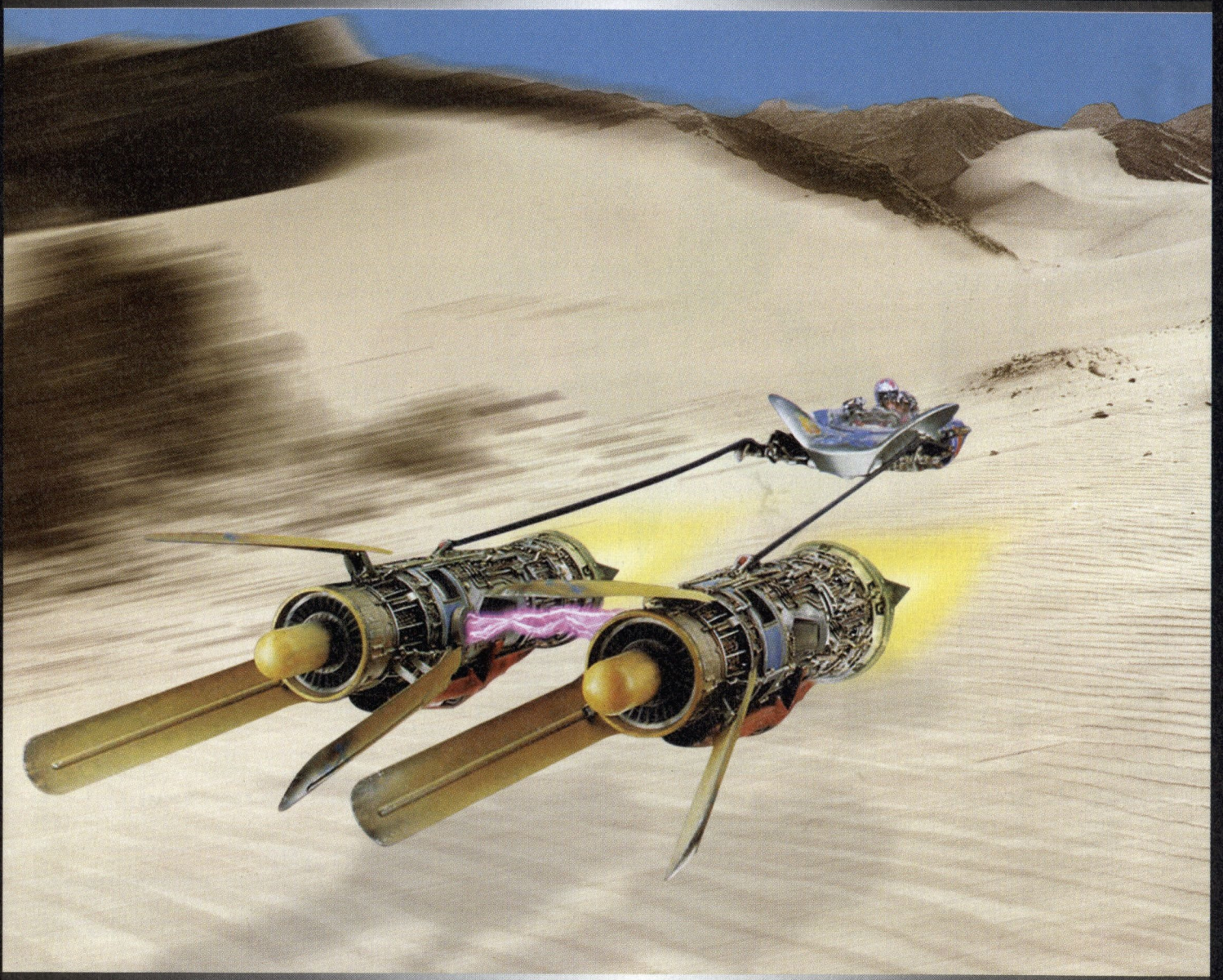


To discover for yourself how LucasArts has thoroughly redefined the driving experience, visit your local LucasArts dealer. Or reward yourself with an exhilarating test drive at www.starwarsracer.com



www.starwarsracer.com
www.starwars.com

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The modified 620C

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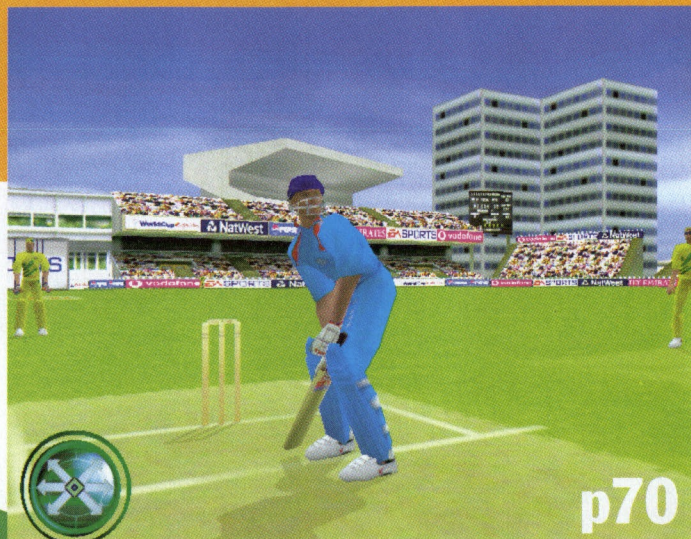
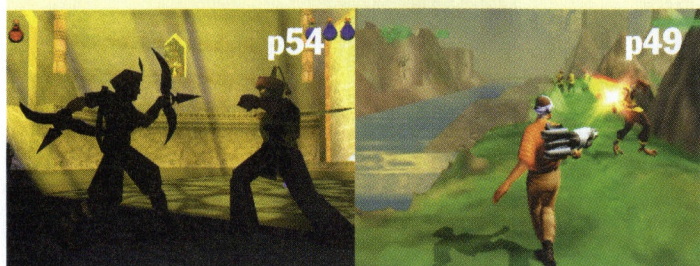
Not the first bit of coverage for the Big One, and certainly not the last, the latest though, which is as good as it gets.

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Scan in your pet cat and build your very own internet site around it, then sit back and count the hits!

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Wise up to those pesky air defenses. Major Ian tell you how to fly and survive over a hostile environment.

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Dr Ashton knows all, or most. He's Dr Silicon and has the technical answer you crave.

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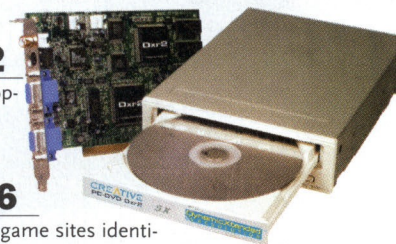
Win things and be happy.

Read Error 145

All New Funny Bit! David claims he can be funny each month, so we gave him this page to prove it. Laugh now.

Flashback 146

Prince of Persia! Yes! We jumped! We climbed! We fought evil baddies! We fell on the spikes of impalement! Oh the memories...



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MECHWARRIOR3

COMING JUNE 1999



Microsoft



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What we're playing:

Ben: TOCA 2, Heroes 3, Grand Prix Legends,

Requiem TNT2, Fat Boy Slim

March: Final Fantasy VII, Zelda 64, Ep 1 Racer,

Ultima IV, Akasha

David: Thief, Castlevania: Symphony of the

Night, Half-Life, Ultima V, Mogwai, Rachel's

Malcolm: Quake3: Arena, FFXVIII, Darkstalkers 3,

DJ Krush, Rob Swift

Swimming in champagne



Ask a few gamers what the defining moment, in games, was for them.

I'd bet that a fair percentage would say either the first time they saw Quake running, or more likely, the first time they saw Quake running on a 3dfx card. It was a paradigm leap in gaming. One that we didn't reasonably expect to see for another

decade. Suddenly we were immersed in a 3D world that looked amazing and ran as fast as we'd ever want. The decade of CPU-driven software 3D was over forever, and what a dreary cycle that was! Our technical desires were directed wholly at Intel. We lived for their next CPU in the pessimistic hope that we might be able to run our flight sims at a higher resolution. 1024 x 768? The holy grail, the 'good as it gets' resolution... When 3dfx arrived our Pentium 90's could just manage 1024 x 768, but the handful of games that actually supported this esoteric resolution looked disappointingly unimpressive and ran at an unplayable sub-10 FPS. I'm sure that the arrival of 3dfx's Voodoo Graphics chipset revitalised gaming for many.

Over the ensuing 3 years we would desperately seek out any new 3D game, regardless of the gameplay quality, and disappear in each new 3D world with a sense of rapture and childish delight. Wonderful stuff, gaming as we always dreamt it could be, but never expected it to become a reality.

Here at the PCPP offices, when we first ran Quake on our P133, we got 30+ FPS at the maximum Voodoo Graphics resolution of 640 x 480. We all agreed at the time that this combination (P133 + Voodoo Graphics) was clearly the apex of gaming technology, and that none of us would ever need to upgrade again. Ha!

Bloody idiots, the lot of us! Being adults, and therefore with no real sense of imagination, we just couldn't visualise a game looking any better...

I've had a TNT2 in my PC for the last fortnight. TOCA 2 runs at 25+ FPS in 1600 x 1200 resolution, on a P2 400. On top of this mind-blowing performance, the TNT2's image quality is also a vast improvement over the now distinctive 3dfx-look. Bloody hell! What next?

This is exciting stuff and we're all buzzing over the new standard in 3D graphics, but as chuffed as we are, this is incomparable to the excitement we felt when 3dfx's Voodoo Graphics first arrived. This is a good thing; this blasé attitude of ours. We see something categorically amazing, casually acknowledge it as such, then wonder out loud if there's anything better around.

Yes! Blessed be thy silicon! Now we're swimming in champagne. All new games look incredible, most play pretty well and gaming life is good. Damn I love this stuff.

Ben Mansill
Editor



YOU'VE SEEN THE MOVIE, YOU KNOW THE LEGEND...

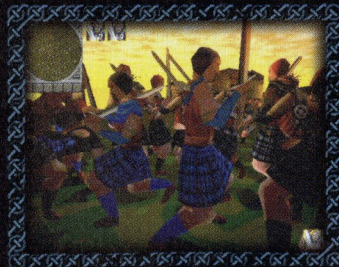


**"THEY MAY TAKE OUR LIVES,
BUT THEY'LL NEVER TAKE
OUR FREEDOM!"**

Based on Mel Gibson's award-winning movie, Braveheart the game recreates the atmosphere and excitement of Scotland's legendary struggle for freedom against the English invaders.

KEY FEATURES

- Real-time Strategy and 3-D tactical combat.
- Trade, Diplomacy and Resource Management.
- Entire terrain of England and Scotland accurately recreated from Satellite data!
- Night and day battles, weather effects and seasonal variations.
- Epic battles in true 3D allowing you to fight at army level or close-in, man to man.
- Includes film footage and dialogue from the original film.



ICON
PRODUCTIONS



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Wallace Clan Trust.



Braveheart TM & © 1999 Paramount Pictures and 20th Century Fox Corporation. © and published by Eidos Interactive 1999. All rights reserved.



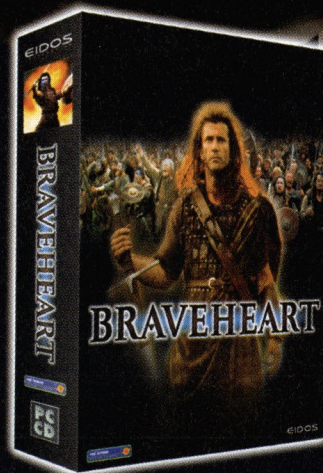
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CD GUIDE

Yet another feast of Gaming Goodness

CD #38

Starting the PC PowerPlay CD

Welcome to the PCPowerPlay double cover CD. We have included all the popular programs to make the most of your PC. Using the CD is easy. Simply insert the CD into your CDROM drive and it should automatically bring up the Menu interface. (If not, don't panic, just click on the RUNME.BAT file to manually install the program).

Once the menu is up, you can navigate the screens using your mouse. Click on the category of your choice (eg Education, Fun, Games, etc..) to begin. Have a look at the programs, and if you see something you like to try out, just click on it. Depending on your choice, the program will either install itself to the hard drive or run straight off the CD.

cdtech@powerplay.next.com.au

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PC PowerPlay CD Returns

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The Games



KingPin

Publisher: Interplay

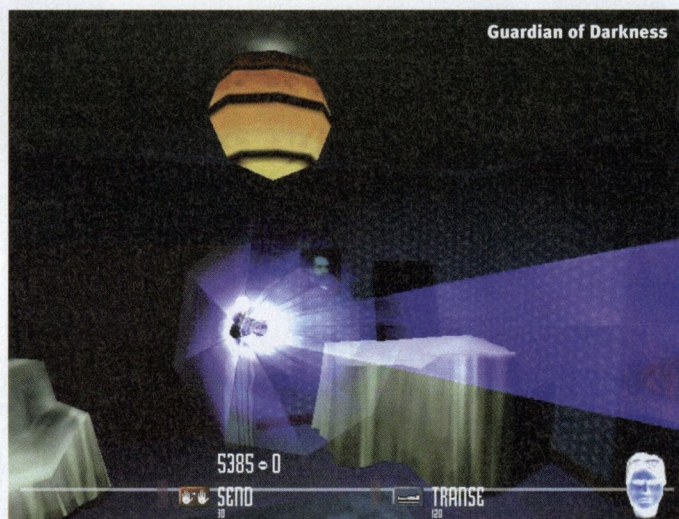
Developer: Xatrix

Genre: 1st Person Shooter

Somewhere in a past that never existed lies the world of Kingpin- a landscape of burned-out buildings and urban decay, where local gangs rule the streets. Begin your rise to the top by assembling your own gang of thugs. If a new member turns out to be a punk, waste him and make way for new blood. Moving up in the world is sure to attract the attention of the Kingpin; eventually you're going to have to take him down. But you knew that anyway...

Need: P200, 32MB, 3D Card

Want: P2-266, 64MB, 3D Card



Apache Havoc

Publisher: Empire Interactive

Developer: Empire Interactive

Genre: Simulations (Flight)

Apache Havoc delivers Head to Head chopper warfare with two equally incredibly-modelled sims. Take control of either simulated combat helicopters: the US AH-64D Apache Longbow and the Russian Mil-28N Havoc B.

A 3D engine specially designed for low-level helicopter combat, which renders a highly sculpted terrain, enabling gamers to use natural and man-made features in true

combat tactics. Now you can actually hover above a forest road, hiding behind the trees, out of enemy line of sight.

Need: P266, 32MB, SVGA

Want: P2-300, 64Mb, 3D Card

Guardian of Darkness

Publisher: Cryo Interactive

Genre: Platform

Formerly holders of the keys, regulators of the flow of souls, they had no choice but to serve the cause, without failing. Princes or beggars, they were the guardians of the holy frontier between life and death, of the sacred gate through which you can pass but never return. Yet the great



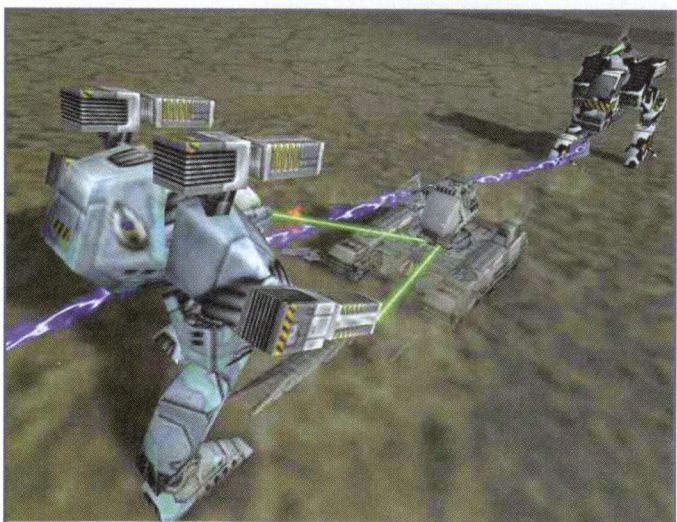
beyond can still err... He is the heir to the supreme guards of this frontier known as "The Gate". He is the chosen one. Ekna is an exorcist monk. Solitary, mysterious, he has learned all the fundamental knowledge of mental energy and masters the power of prayer. He is a higher initiate of "The Gate". This ultra-secret organization regularly sends him on the most perilous missions involving the paranormal. His spiritual powers enable him to unravel the dark-

est investigations, confronting powerful horrors with his combat magic.

Need: P200, 32MB, 3D Card
Want: P266, 64Mb, 3D Card

Malkari

Publisher: Interactive Magic
Developer: Interactive Magic
Genre: Strategy (Turn Based)
Malkari has but one hope: from chaos must emerge a great leader, one who can unite all the Chapters of his Guild, and by



STARSIEGE

Publisher: Dynamix
Developer: Dynamix
Genre: Simulation

They are multiplying in the void somewhere beyond Neptune, changing, evolving into new models. Constructing their armada in hidden shipyards and factories, waiting for the opportunity to return to Earth. Increasingly, Cybrid drones slip toward the inner planets, observing human activity. The Cybrids are ready. Their legions are more than enough to decimate the , according to their calculations. However, they have defied such conclusions before, and Prometheus wants to be even more certain.

Need: P166, 32MB, SVGA
Want: P233, 64MB, 3D Card



ROLLCAGE

Publisher: Psygnosis
Developer: ATD

Genre: Simulations (Driving)
It's fast and furious, hi-octane fun. Rollcage combines combat action with next generation road racing giving you the most explosive and outrageous game on wheels! . Drive your indestructible vehicles anywhere and everywhere - from the sides of walls to the roofs of tunnels . Blast away at the scenery with 8 innovative weapons to slow down your opponents.

Need: P166, 16MB, SVGA
Want: P233, 32MB, 3D Card



political persuasion or force of arms obtain the surrender of all who oppose him. Such a leader might at last end the age-old wars and unite Malkari into one glorious empire, and outshine even the greatest achievements of ages long past.

Need: P90, 16MB, SVGA
Want: P133, 32MB, SVGA 2MB

Mars Maniacs

Developer: Church of Electronic Entertainment
Genre: Simulations (Driving)
Mars Maniacs is a fast racing

game set on the planet Mars. Gamers race in hovercrafts shaped as old 57' cars, rebuilt with powerful jet engines. The game's attractive and addictive playability, unique designs, high quality graphics, fast controls, involvement of renown music artists and technical superiority are some of the key aspects. The gamer is submerged in a 3D environment that features longer visibility and a more detailed landscape than any other racing game.
Need: P200, 32MB, SVGA
Want: P233, 64MB, 3D Card





Street Wars

Publisher: Infogrames

Developer: Studio3

Genre: Strategy (Real Time)

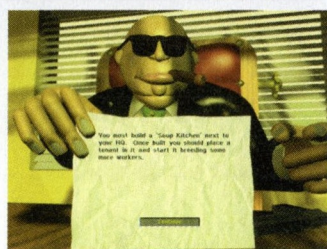
Street Wars is the sequel to Constructor. It is set during the American gangster era of the 1920's and 30's, Street Wars puts you in the role of an aspiring young hoodlum trying to impress the Godfather while trying build an empire of your own. The Godfather is a hard man to please and from the outset he makes your initiation into the 'Family' a tough one. The tasks you have to complete could ultimately lead to your total control over a city and a put motley army of gangsters, thugs and undesirables at your disposal.

Just when you think you've really made it - you have a string of shady businesses, Policemen's pockets are full of 'charity' funds and people cross the road when they see you coming - the Godfather tells you he needs a favor doing in another city, only this time it's going to be really tough.

Street Wars is a unique blend of real time strategy, management sim and dark humour.

Need: P166, 32MB, SVGA

Want: P233, 64MB, SVGA 2MB



Tomb Raider II Gold: The Golden Mask

Publisher: Eidos Interactive

Developer: Core Design

Genre: Adventure

What? But we're up to Tomb Raider III now, right? Well yes but this is a "Gold" edition of Tomb Raider II - basically the same game given a slick layer of polish and with lots of tweaks here and there to beef up the gameplay. Join Lara in 4 new levels in the final world of Tomb Raider II. Help her explore an abandoned mine shaft in Alaska and discover a strange and hidden world. Many more surprises await as Lara uncovers the secret of the Golden Mask.

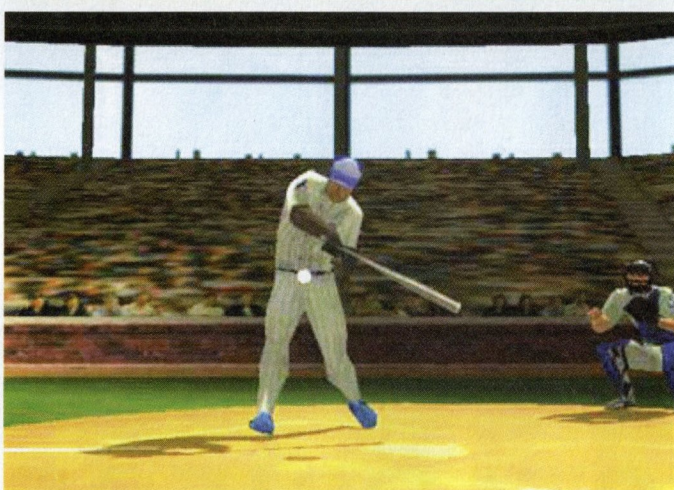
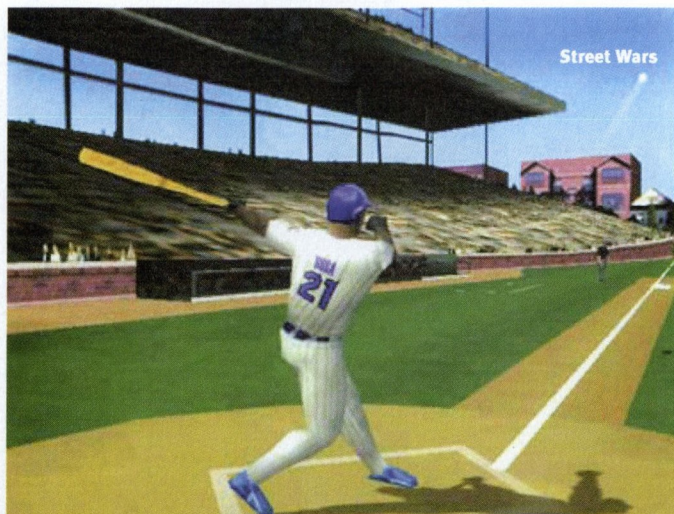
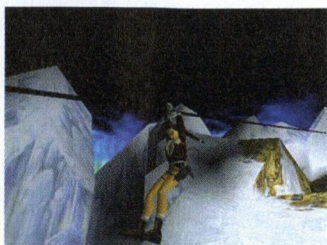
Triple Play 2000

Publisher: EA Sports

Developer: EA Sports

Genre: Sports - Baseball

EA SPORTS' award-winning Triple Play Baseball series is back for another big season. Triple Play 2000's more-responsive hitting gives you the control to hit for placement or power — lift a bloop single over the short-stop's head, drive a double into the gap, or jack a monster home run into another time zone.



Trophy Bass 3D

Publisher: Sierra Sports

Developer: Sierra Sports

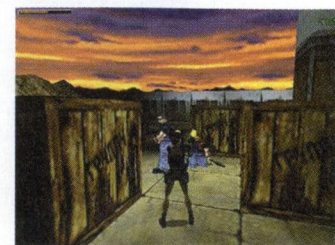
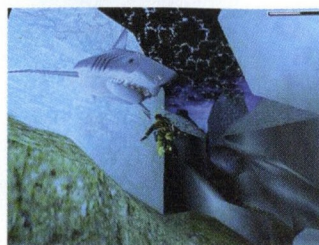
Genre: Sports - Fishing

Trophy Bass 2 is a sport fishing simulation that lets you bait and battle bass for fame and fortune, without ever having to change into hip waders. Hook digital

fish on solo trips, compete against the pros, or take your fishing trip online to compete with other fishermen! But don't try eating your catch - one bite of digital fish and you'll be flossing for hours.

Need: P200, 16MB, 3D Card

Want: P266, 32MB, 3D Card



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and deadly.

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watch out:
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Utilities & Patches

3D-FTP 32-bit 1.5

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3D Rad

3D Rad is an easy-to-use 3D game creator that lets you build interactive 3D worlds by placing animated, intelligent 3D elements into virtual space. Your interactive 3D productions can be compiled in a standalone format that you can freely distribute and sell. In this 2.2 version, 3D Rad becomes a native Windows application producing native Windows games, and provides a new 3D engine supporting hardware acceleration, dynamic-colored multiple light sources, translucent textures, fog effects, and gouraud shading. Additionally, the 3D engine is integrated with a new 16-bit 3D sound system, simulating perception of sound position in space by roll-off, arrival-offset, muffling, and Doppler effect.

Gravity 2.11

Gravity is a 32-bit newsreader that allows you to view material from and contribute articles in the form of text and graphics to more than 15,000 newsgroups worldwide. Gravity provides excellent multitasking capabilities for searching, sorting, and completing most newsreading tasks in the background. It features the ability to launch your

Web browser and point it to Deja News to access news search tools, an image gallery for storing and viewing images, mid-session server switching, a customizable toolbar, automatic importing of each news server database's standard NNTP news-rc file, newsgroup previewing, and HTML suppression.

Launchkaos

Launchkaos is a fully skin-compatible launcher that you can use to organize and access your favorite programs, documents, and more. It comes with a 3D textured skin, and you can download other free skins that make the launcher look like anything you can imagine. And if you're creative and handy with Photoshop (or the like), you can make your own skins.

Leech

Leech is an offline Web browser utility for Windows 95/98/NT that downloads Web site content to your hard drive. It is a multithreaded application which allows you to simultaneously "leech" multiple files from a server. These files are stored on your hard drive and can be viewed later without having to access the Internet. Files can be filtered by file extension or file size, and SSL encryption is supported.

MailEye

MailEye is a talking POP email notification utility. It runs in the background and periodically checks your email accounts for messages. When there is mail, MailEye can play sounds, talk, run your main email client, or

WinRAM Booster

WinRAM Booster allows you to increase your available RAM for any application with one mouse click, or automatically whenever you start an application. It works by defragmenting your system memory and the swap file, allowing you to recover RAM from the operating system and applications. You can create shortcuts to programs with optimization commands that are executed before the program is started (for example, "Set xMB free before starting this program"). You also can set the program to optimize every 30 minutes, or when 80 percent of your memory is used.

perform other actions you specify, all automatically. You can also set MailEye to check your email when you turn on your computer, simplifying your daily routine.

Microangelo 98

Microangelo 98 is a suite of utilities for working with icons, cursors, and animated cursors. It includes Explorer, Librarian, Studio, Animator, and Engineer utilities, which have been specifically designed to help users locate, manage, create, and edit the smaller graphical elements used on the latest Windows desktops.

SmartDraw (32-bit)

SmartDraw lets anyone draw great-looking flowcharts, organizational charts, technical drawings, forms, and business presentations. Its ease of use makes it particularly suitable for users who need to create professional-quality drawings quickly and simply. Features include automatic formatting, rotation, customizable toolbars, professional color styles, and a library of more than 1,500 ready-made symbols and templates. The Professional Edition also includes a real-time spelling checker, search and replace, advanced import and export filters (for AutoCAD, DXF, Visio, EPS, and other popular formats), and more.

tvMenuBar Control

The tvMenuBar ActiveX control allows developers to place a menu in a band of a CoolBar control. You can associate images from an ImageList control with menu items. You can also associate a short descriptive message for each menu item, which can be displayed in a pane of a StatusBar control when the menu item is highlighted. Keyboard shortcuts can be

defined, and full online help with coding examples is included. This version adds a new ImageList feature, so now you can either share an existing ImageList that is on your form, or you can define your own set of images directly within the tvMenuBar control.

WinBlind

If you're tired of your Windows desktop, and want a change, try out this fun, free program. You can set your desktop and applications to look as if you're running the BeOS, a Mac, or OS2. Various skins/personalities are included in this preview version. You can download additional skins from the Stardock Systems Web site, and you can even create your own. However, you should read the enclosed information file carefully: if you find that WindowBlinds is causing any app to behave unpredictably, you can arrange that this app isn't enhanced with the WindowBlinds program.

Patches

Apache Havoc
Myth 2
Pro Pilot 99
Shogo
Sin
Thief
WW2 Fighter

Addons

Combat Flight Sim
Thief

Tools

McAfee Virus Scanner
Mini GL
Voodoo 1 drivers
Voodoo 2 drivers
Winzip

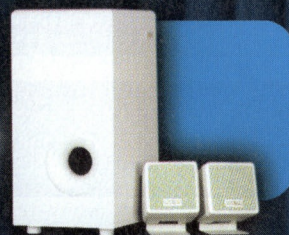
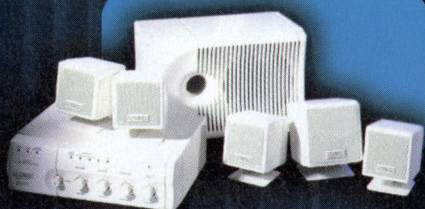
Roger Wilco

This first, official, non-beta, non-test release of Roger Wilco presents a small, standalone application that allows you and your friends to talk to each other while playing multiplayer games online. It works with most existing games, such as Quake II, Diablo, Tribes, Unreal, and StarCraft, and will also work with other games with multiplayer capabilities that are still in development. Of course, if you're thinking of using Roger Wilco with a particular game, you could look up the list of compatible games here. In addition to games, Roger Wilco will work with ICQ so that you can chat verbally with your nongamer friends. You talk to the other players by either pressing a single key or by setting up Roger Wilco to be voice activated. You don't need a second sound card, just one capable of full-duplex audio and a microphone. Roger Wilco supports thousands of users on a channel without the need for a dedicated server, and a 14.4-kbps modem is sufficient (28.8 kbps is preferred).

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SIDELINES

We were saddened to hear this month of the death of Alan Clark, a former Sierra designer and programmer. Whilst cycling one afternoon, Clark was hit by a speeding car that had just been stolen. He died in hospital later that day from injuries sustained in the accident. He was 39, leaving behind a wife and two children.

At first, Synergistic Software and later Sierra, Clark was involved in the development of many games, including the innovative *Birthingright* and *Shadowkeep*. Sierra's Gary Powell posted this brief, but poignant message on a newsgroup: "Alan had been slated to work on *Leisure Suit Larry 3D* but when that was cancelled [he] was let go. He was in the process of writing his own paper game and then starting up another company. He was very pleased at how things were working out. Alan will be missed by all of us here."

In a move that surprises only because you wonder why it hadn't happened sooner, Electronic Arts have announced a new range of game titles. Under the brand, EA Sports Outdoor, a new series of fishing and - yes - hunting titles will bring their morally-questionable pastimes to the comfort of your home PC. First to receive the slick EA treatment is *Master Hunter*, a first or third-person shooter in which small, cuddly, furry, little animals are brutally (That's enough - Ed)... thoughtlessly (Enough! - Ed)... slaughtered in cold blood! (Sigh - Ed).

Resounding Technology's funky Roger Wilco software, which we've mentioned in the past, has just been released in demo form. Happily, it isn't the latest Space Quest game, but instead a program that lets you actually talk to friends over the net while you're multi-playing with them. That's talk as in real speech, by the way, so you'll need a microphone. Games that have Roger's support include *Quake 2*, *Starcraft* and *Starsiege Tribes*. You can even use it in conjunction with ICQ to chat while not playing games. Links to the demo can be found at www.resounding.com.

While news on the future of their highly-anticipated online RPG, *Middle Earth*, remains cloudy, Sierra have announced details of another game that will make use of the same popular licence. To be developed by Berkeley Systems, *Orcs: Revenge of the Ancient* is a strategy game set in the world of Tolkien's classic fantasy creation. As a hairy and foul-breathed orc chieftain, the player will amass an army of like-minded brutes and attempt to subdue warring rival tribes through the usual combination of single and multiplayer missions.

AMD K7

The beginning of the end of Intel's reign

There has been an incredible amount of debate as to what clock speed AMD will eventually release the AMD K7 processor. They have shown an AMD K7 running at 500 and 600MHz versions behind closed doors, so we should probably expect 500, 550 and 600MHz versions to show their faces sometime later this year.

AMD's flagship CPU will beat a Pentium III at floating Point calculations at a similar clock. This has been the bane of AMD

from the very start of the K series processors, in that Intel's FPU was always much stronger than theirs. Faster FPU means better 3D geometry speed and thus, faster 3D games.

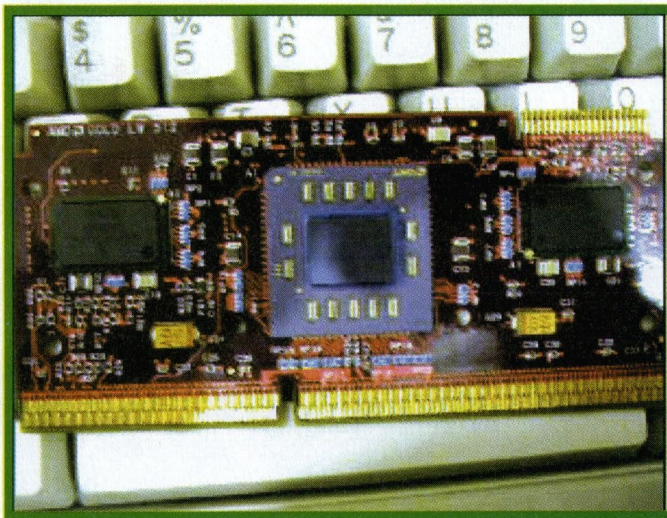
K7 is the wonder chip that AMD have been hoping for, which could give Intel a really bad headache and could mean Intel's Coppermine processor could see the light of day much sooner than expected.

That said, AMD has still got a lot of work to do if they want to

make this processor work. The major hurdles are getting enough K7 processors into the channel in time. AMD only have one viable fabrication plant active at the moment. The other problem is the fact that the K7 requires a totally new motherboard design and chipset for the K7's proprietary SlotA Cartridge type. To AMD's credit though, they managed to pull this off with their K6 product, so as long as they work with the big name chip manufacturers like ALi and VIA they should get a motherboard into production in time.

The actual performance of the K7 processor is still a mystery. Benchmark scores can be found on the Internet but can not be counted on without actually testing a sample K7 processor. AMD's K7 certainly offers great hope for all gamers, finally a chip that could possibly beat Intel at its own game. One thing should be said though, is if the K7 isn't faster than a Pentium III at a similar clock speed AMD might be able to win the MHz race - read the Super-G news piece to find out how.

Garry Wallis



Trouble at Ion Storm

And so the Ion Storm misadventures continue - this time in court. For those who missed out the first time around, a few months back the Dallas Observer broke a story about the financial excesses and turbulent in-house happenings at Ion Storm. Publishers Eidos were reportedly unhappy that the \$30 million they had poured into the much-hyped development team had returned just one game - *Dominion* (55% in PCPP#31).

Now the various parties have gone to court, with Ion filing a lawsuit against their ex-CEO, Robert Wright, accusing him of jeopardising their relationship with Eidos by encouraging the defection last year of several core members of the Daikatana team. Needless to say, Wright's lawyers have denied that their client was thus involved in said events. Meanwhile, Eidos themselves are apparently ready to buy out Ion Storm in an attempt to prevent

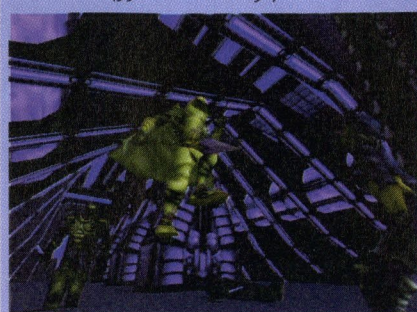
any further haemorrhaging of their money and, if so, those on the business side of matters at Ion could well be looking for employment elsewhere.

Clearly, all three prominent Ion Storm titles - *Deus Ex*, *Anachronox* and *Daikatana* - have the potential to be successful.



Can *Deus Ex* (above) and *Anachronox* save the embattled Ion Storm? Reactions at E3 could be critical

Whether they can make back anything like the amount that has been invested into them is another matter entirely. All three games will be on show at the Eidos stand at E3, so we'll have a report on their status next month.



THE BEAST LIVES!

Yes, that's right... ONE GIGAHERTZ

You want cool? You want COOL! You want the most desirable PC on the planet? You want the Kryotech Super-G, the world's first 1GHz (1000 MHz) desktop PC.

This mighty leap towards the ultimate apex of human technological perfection is not some snappy new CPU stealthily kept under wraps, nor is it a 'CelerCray' low-end version of a supercomputer's heart. No, the Super-G is a joyous synthesis of traditional atomic-level CPU science, with even more traditional machinery - the refrigerator, to be exact.

CPU's run hot. That's why the newest P2 and 3's have stinking great fan plus heatsink combo's. The higher the MHz a CPU runs at, the hotter it gets. All CPU's have physical limits, and these can even vary between production runs of the same intended frequency. CPU makers such as Intel and AMD test their product for stable operation at the desired MHz. If a batch fails, it is then tested at the next lower standard MHz rating, with the CPU being sold at whatever speed it runs reliably at. Keep a CPU cool and it will run at a higher MHz, whether by the natural effect of it approaching superconductivity, or by allowing a higher range of overclocking possibilities.

Kryotech, a Columbia USA-based spin-off of NCR Corporation, have been working since 1996 to develop cheap and efficient cooling systems for the home PC. To date they have released several integrated systems, including an AMD K6-2 475 @ 600MHz, and a Digital Alpha @ 767MHz, as well as their Renegade, a stand-alone cooler for most Pentium II/III, Slot 1 and Socket370 versions of



Dedicated to building the fastest home computer in the world. The boffins at Kryotech

the Celeron PCs. Sexy stuff, but with a standard Pentium III offering equivalent or better performance for gamers at a much lower cost, demand was low.

Enter the pleasingly named Super-G. This Carmack-Ferrari of the PC world is purpose-built around the AMD K7. This is the CPU that looks to instantly attain Most Wanted status amongst gamers - see the related story for more on that. AMD's Chairman and CEO, Al Quick, said in a press release "Working together (with AMD), we have produced the Super-G, a true next-generation computer system. With performance measured in gigahertz instead of megahertz, and state-of-the-art cooling integrated as a feature rather than an afterthought, the Super-G establishes a new standard for the rest of the industry to follow."

Their technique uses a refrigeration unit which forms the base of the PC case. It uses domestic fridge mechanics. Turn the thing on and it sounds like a fridge kicking in. Heavily insulated piping runs through the case to the CPU, where a clamp device surrounds the CPU, cooling it to as-yet undisclosed temperatures and permitting operation at the magic 1GHz.

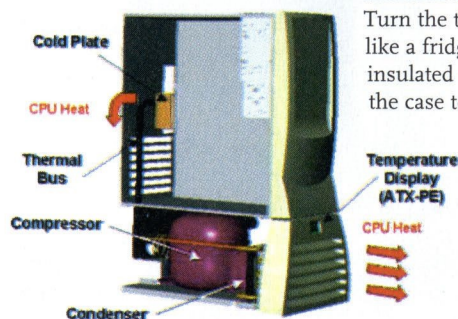
Current Kryotech cooling systems will keep a CPU at around -40C, while the company is developing a -123C system. A huge bonus for this design is that your PC's ambient temperature will be considerably lower - no heater in the middle. Everything and especially your next-gen 3D card will run cooler and potentially faster.

The Super-G will be available "later this year". Pricing is unknown at this stage. Kryotech's Australian distributor is Ifix Computers, <http://www.ifixcomputers.com.au>.

Advanced CPU/system cooling, in some form, will become commonplace. Each leap in clever processor design is still limited by operational temperature limits. Kryotech's system is turbocharging for your CPU. While cooling isn't quite the 'free' bonus that is overclocking, it sure feels that way. If the eventual pricing of the Super-G is on par with its performance, then cooling your existing system in some other way should be considered. Alternative designs will emerge shortly - Intel have demonstrated a cooled Xeon running at 800MHz, but did not disclose their method.

All too good. If only it sounded less like a Kambrook and more like a hyperdrive, and was black...

Ben Mansill



SIDELINES

The unstoppable Tomb Raider hype machine seems no nearer to slowing down this year, despite the lukewarm reception afforded the third installment of the Adventures of Lara Croft. Clearly stating their intent to have us all playing Tomb Raider 4 as we welcome in the next millennium at the end of this year, Eidos have informed an eager gaming world that they have chosen the new Lara. Her name? (You're never going to believe this). Lara Weller.

A 24 year old model, Ms Weller is understandably keen on her new role as feminist icon and, presumably, cultural ambassador for Britain. "It's taken a while to sink in that I will actually represent Lara Croft, but the more I think about it, the more excited I get about the whole idea," Weller was reported to have said. "It's actually quite amazing since in the past people have mentioned that I remind them of the Tomb Raider girl!"

In a touching farewell, former Lara, Nell McAndrew, had this to say: "It's been a brilliant experience travelling the world as Lara, but it's time to hang up my Uzi and do something different."

"Go for the eyes, Boole! Go for the eyes!" If that cry to glory brought a tear to your eye (terrible pun entirely intended), then news that the Baldur's Gate expansion pack, Tales Of The Sword Coast, was enduring the duplication process at the time we went to print should cheer you up immensely. In fact, by the time you read this, it ought to be available in stores around the country. Additionally, Interplay have just released a DVD version of Baldur's Gate that sadly, though predictably, doesn't feature the add-on. However, it does include Black Isle's superb post-nuclear RPG, Fallout. It's not often that the bonus game is actually better than the main attraction!

The fallout from the upheavals at Sierra has yet to clear. The promised multiplayer patch for their Quest For Glory V has been cancelled. Initially slated to be a main feature of the original release, the troubled patch was then delayed. The subsequent disbanding of Yosemite Entertainment, the people behind Lori Cole's last game in the longstanding series, proved to be the final nail in the coffin. Although such a decision is never pleasing, given the time that has passed since the game's release, it's unlikely that the lack of multiplayer support will be missed.

SIDELINES

Anyone remember Pirates? It was the classic ocean-going, cutlass-wielding, scurvy-acquiring, and doubloon-counting game of strategy and sword-fights. Well, Eidos have handed us a tattered parchment that could lead to the rediscovery of this long lost gameplay treasure. For their own Cutthroats is a pirate sim where the player sails a galleon around the Caribbean with the skull-and-crossbones flying proudly aloft. More news on this exciting title soon.

Sounding a wake-up call to our own politicians, Pennsylvanian senator, Jack Wagner, has called for the classification of computer and video games in the United States to be brought more into line with that of film and video. Detailing that ratings for games become mandatory and that the highest classification be a Restricted 18, Wagner's proposed legislation will deem it an offence to sell, rent or provide R rated games to minors. Will the Australian government follow suit and introduce a similar R rating for games?

Just as we're still recovering from the shock (haha) that System Shock 2 will be hijacking our PCs later this year, Ken Levine from Irrational Games has mentioned the possibility of a third in the series. "Since the System Shock series has received so much interest and acclaim from the gaming community, I'm sure the team would be very excited about carrying the franchise forward. No publishing agreements have been made yet for a third title, but we'll see what happens," teased Ken. Before adding, "Next generation platforms are certainly a possibility.". Irrational are presently finishing up System Shock 2 for release through EA.

Those who still have some stomach contents left after several rides on the "delights" of Rollercoaster Tycoon can rest assured now that Bullfrog are offering us the chance to puke some more with Theme Park World. Older readers may recall the first Theme Park, a jolly but clever strategy sim released in 1994. Which RCT ripped off, basically. The sequel boasts some nice 3D visuals, including a first-person view to be utilised when you need to test out the latest experimental and terrifying ride.

NewsWire
US

Don St John



The amazing one is Origin. True, they've scored big with Ultima Online, and the dollar signs may be lighting up their eyes; they also have the protection of the great Electronic Arts mothership to rely on. But they've also sold a hell of a lot of CD (and even floppy disk) games in their time. The idea that all forthcoming titles that start with the magic words "Wing Commander" and "Crusader" is just audacious. The Wing games particularly have been high-impact graphically, with all those cut scenes that eat up lots of CD space. One might have imagined these ending up on DVD, not online, but the possibilities for play are exciting.

They also are for Interactive

Magic, which is dumping its CD games for a different reason-they weren't making any money on them. Only Seven Kingdoms stood out among IMagic's releases over the past year or two, and even that didn't sell so great, with Age Of Empires cutting heavily into turf that had particularly been IMagic's province. Thing is, if you're a fly-guy or a besotted strategy player, this is still a game company that's worth keeping an eye on. My hardcore flight sim friends still swear by Warbirds, and any number of their strategy titles will make for satisfying online play. In the meantime, let the record show that their last CD release is Mortyr....a shooter. Sign of the times, folks.

The night of nights

While attending the E3 Show in Los Angeles in mid May, the well tuxedo-ed PowerPlay staffers will swing by the gaming equivalent of the Oscars. For the Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences is holding its annual awards night to celebrate the last twelve months in gaming. The



Miyamoto (top) and Meier

awards are split into two divisions - PC and console - with a number of different categories within each to reward achievement in areas such as graphics, sound, design, story, and innovation. Ultimately, the last award will be given to the Overall Game of the Year selected from all formats. Those games lucky enough to be considered are: Alpha Centauri, Banjo-Kazooie, Grim Fandango, Half-Life, Metal Gear Solid, Star Wars: Rogue Squadron, and Zelda: Ocarina Of Time. While we might question the wisdom of at least one of the nominations, it's heartening to see that the best games have been recognised. (Except Thief, of course - DW). The smart money is on a battle between Zelda and Half-Life for the top award. Elsewhere, Nintendo's Shigeru Miyamoto, the first inductee to the Hall Of Fame last year, will present an award to the latest recipient, Sid Meier. Congrats all round, Sid!

OzUnreal Map Editing Competition

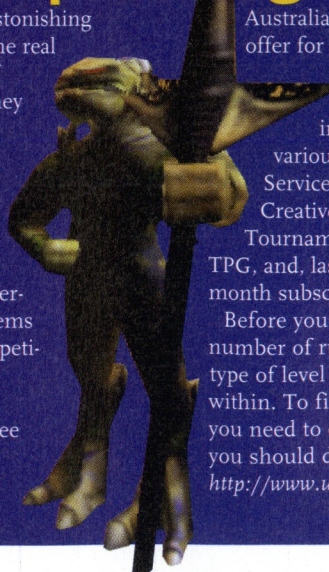
You know, besides the often astonishing advances in 3D technology, the real beauty of the current wave of first-person shooters is the way they actively encourage a DIY attitude. Whether it be creating mods, cutting character skins or editing entirely new levels, they all allow the player to play a part in the ongoing development of the game. With this in mind, the generous people at Ayr Computer Systems in Queensland are holding a competition for all budding Unreal level designers to show off their wares.

Entrants will be divided into three categories - with deathmatch and single player maps judged separately while, as this is an

Australia only contest, a special prize is on offer for those levels with a distinctly

Australian theme. Winners will receive a range of goodies, including: network cards from Ayr, various memory chips from Ami Computer Services, SoundBlaster Live cards from Creative, copies of GT Interactive's Unreal Tournament, Internet Access Accounts from TPG, and, last but not most definitely not least, 6-month subscriptions from PC Powerplay.

Before you get too excited, though, there are a number of rules and regulations regarding the type of level you design and the features found within. To find out more information on what you need to do - and how to enter, of course - you should direct your web browser to <http://www.unreal.net/ozunreal>. Good luck!



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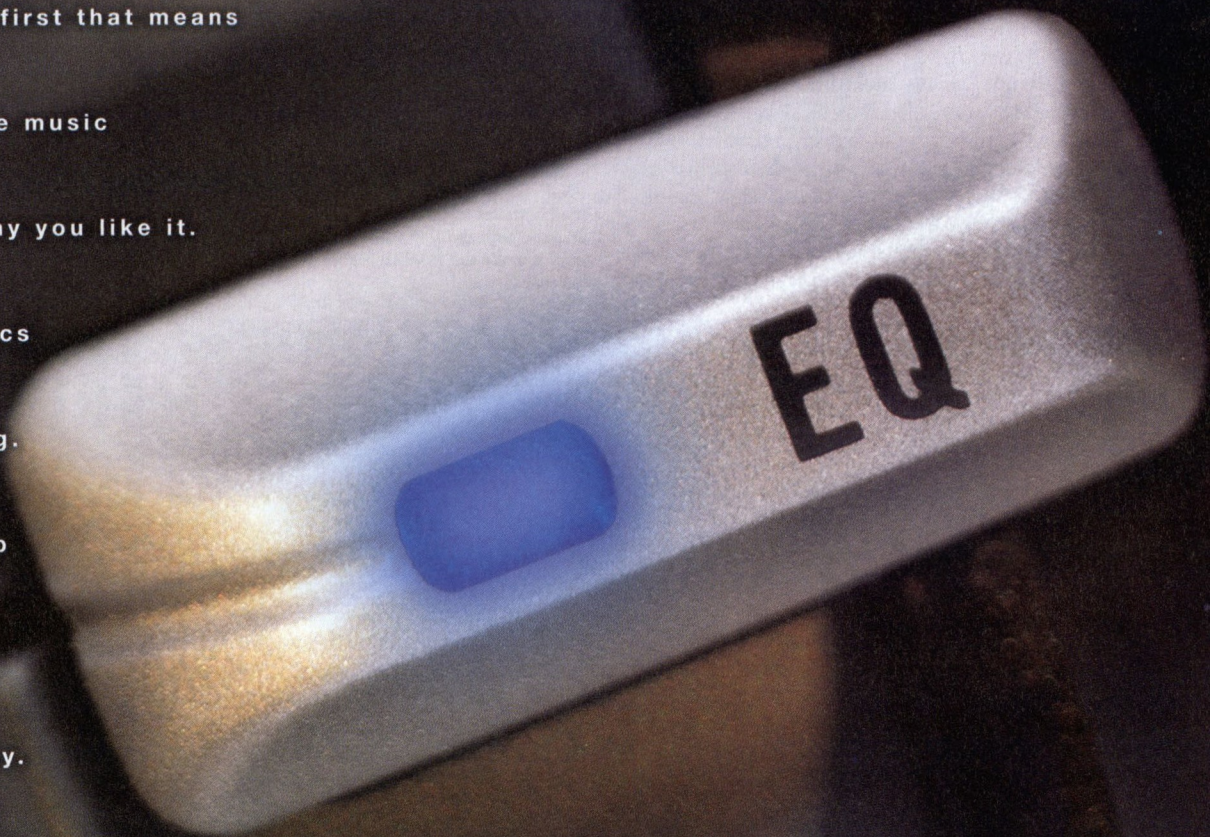
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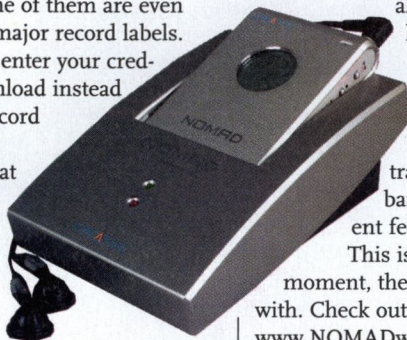
NOMAD

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M P3 is coming to save us all, you'll see... If you're online, chances are you're aware of this miracle of audio compression technology. If not, here's the short version: Using MP3, a song is compressed to around 3-4 megabytes with no noticeable loss of quality. The internet is loaded with sites offering a staggering range of musical choice - some of them are even legal and endorsed by major record labels. So, the idea is that you enter your credit card details and download instead of having to visit the record store, tops huh?

The problem was that these songs stayed put on your PC. However, portable MP3 players are making inroads and the technology is finally maturing.

NOMAD is the latest and the best we've tested so far. It's from those clever folks at Creative and packs in features not seen in previous players. The meat of the package is the MP3 player itself and the standard 32Mb module. NOMAD can be upgraded with an additional 32Mb for longer playing time. Good stuff, but basic and expected. What



sets the NOMAD apart are the built-in FM tuner and the voice recorder, which can store up to 4 hours of dictated speech for later uploading to your PC via the included parallel port. We also appreciate NOMAD's stylish brushed aluminium look and scrolling LCD display, which shows the current track title and band, an inherent feature of MP3.

This is, for the moment, the toy to be seen with. Check out www.NOMADworld.com for the official word. NOMAD will sell for \$499, or \$599 with the full 64Mb.

Added features such as the FM tuner and especially the voice recorder make the NOMAD highly desirable



Gaming Mouse

Logitech Wingman

In a dazzling flash of inspiration, mouse and stylish peripheral maker Logitech realized that the entire gaming world have been using the mouse to play 99% of their games, and a custom gamer's mouse may just be a hot product. Well duh! Why the hell has it taken so bloody long!? Why only Logitech? Have the R&D departments of these companies been out to lunch for the last few years?

In any case (8...9...10... DEEP BREATH), we finally have a 'gaming mouse'. So what, exactly, makes it gamey? Well, it's black, that's a nice start. It's got "Gaming Mouse" on the side, so you know for sure. It's just the right size; not too big, not too small - lovely for fingertip control, yet not so retarded as, say, the new iMac round mouse. Its buttons have a delightful 'click' action that's light and with minimal movement, so that rapid fire fragging is more precise and less strenuous on the finger. Its mouseball is very heavy, which gives accurate tracking and a great feel.



Mostly though, it's USB with a PS/2 adaptor. In USB mode the Gaming Mouse will sample the mouse's input at around 120 times per second, when compared to the standard PS/2 mouse sampling rate of around 60 times per second, or as low as 30 for a serial mouse.

What this translates to is much smoother movement and control. In practise, using a faster mouse feels like you've just upgraded your CPU, magic stuff.

As smooth as the USB sampling rate is, when used with the PS/2 adaptor the mouse can be 'over-sampled' by using software Logitech include. Using this method, sampling rates of up to 120 times per second are possible.

It's the little things, the many, many, little things that make this mouse so desirable. It's not quite perfect though... Missing is a scroll wheel. This item, as used on the Microsoft Intellimouse, has proven invaluable to FPS gamers for weapon selection.

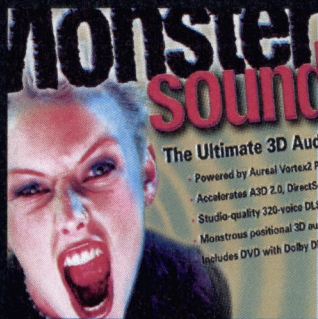
The Logitech Gaming Mouse will retail for \$89.95 and include the full version of Shogo.

IntelliMouse

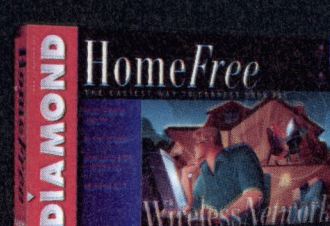
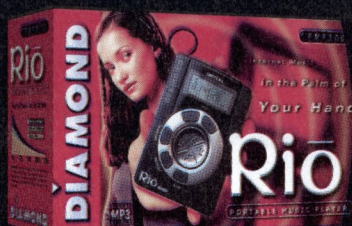
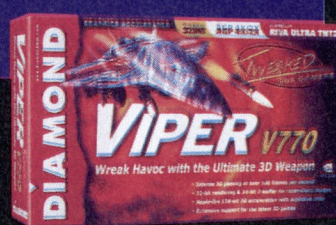
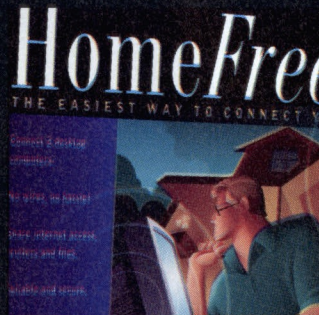
Microsoft

Well, we haven't actually got one to test, but oh how we want one! Microsoft's latest Intellimouse uses a laser to calculate cursor positioning, doing away with a trackball altogether. A cool side effect is the red glow emanating from the underside of the mouse!





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Faster,
Faster,
Faster,
Faster,
Faster.**



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3RD GENERATION VIDEO CARDS

A FIRST LOOK

With the arrival of the next generation of 3D graphics cards, we chain Jere to his PC with orders not to return until he's benchmarked the lot...





Voodoo 3 16Bit

Riva TNT2 32Bit

For many the announcement of the 3rd generation video cards such as the Voodoo 3 and the TNT2 was a rather ho-hum affair. What's the point? Current 3D accelerator hardware is limited to the processor right? Right?

Wrong. It seems that a fair few 3D accelerator manufacturers have led us down the proverbial garden path in relation to 2nd generation accelerator performance. In fact, the Voodoo 2, for example, isn't nearly as beefy as we all thought. The reality is that it falters around the Pentium II 266 mark.

Realistically the Voodoo 2 can only texture the number of polygons that approximately a PII 266 could generate. If you own a faster processor 3rd generation hardware is for you. Actually, even if you don't (but have an AGP port) you're still going to see an incredible performance increase from 3rd gen cards. Confused? Allow me to explain.

A quick call to famed software developers Ratbag (the people responsible for the excellent Powerslide) and suddenly the picture is a lot clearer. A 3D accelerator simply takes the task of painting a polygon away from the CPU. Before 3D accelerators the CPU had to generate the polygon and, in a simple scenario, apply colouring or texturing to the object. It's extraordinarily processor intensive work and even modern CPU's would have a hard time generating any kind of decent 3D environment.

The 3D accelerator assists by taking the burden of painting the 3D world from the processor, allowing it to concentrate purely on generating polygons. Essentially the CPU need only generate a wireframe world and the 3D accelerator steps in to complete the process with gouraud shading, texturing, Z-buffering and a host of other features.

Thanks Greg

So, does a higher resolution require more CPU power? Not at all. Thanks to the clear concise explanations of Greg

Siegle at Ratbag Software, we were informed that running a higher resolution doesn't require any more processor at all. That's the role of the 3D accelerator.

Whether using a BSP tree, portal engine or other 3D rendering methodology the polygons and vertices of an object and the world are already defined. Take the most simplistic example possible, the rendering of a triangle. Now a triangle consists of 3 points, a fact that remains the same irrelevant of the resolution.

For example, was the resolution 640x480, a triangle taking up the entire screen could be rendered at the x,y co-ordinates 320.0 : 0.479 : 639.479. Were you to raise the resolution to 1024 x 768 the only thing that changes are the co-ordinates. There's still only 3 points (or vertices). The triangle would now be rendered at 512.1 : 0.767 : 1023.767.

The most significant difference in resolution change however comes in terms of area. The triangle at a resolution of 640x480 has an area of 153600 pixels. The area of the triangle at 1024x768 is 393216

pixels. This is where fill rate comes into play. A higher resolution requires more pixels (or area) to be painted. Two Voodoo 2's in SLI could render at 1024x768 because they shared the process of filling (or painting) the area of the polygons.

In the case of the 3rd generation cards, as you can see from the numerous graphs located around this article, their fill rate is absolutely phenomenal, particularly when compared to the now obsolete Voodoo 2. Therefore if your processor can render your favourite game comfortably at 640x480, you'll be able to play the same game at 1024x768, or even 1280x1024 on a 3rd generation card.

The Cards

Despite the rather thorough series of figures and graphs that are liberally littered around these pages, all the cards tested are still in beta, particularly the drivers. This goes a long way to explaining the radical, almost nonsensical peaks and troughs that occur for a particular card throughout the different tests.



16Bit vs. 32Bit Colour (zoomed)

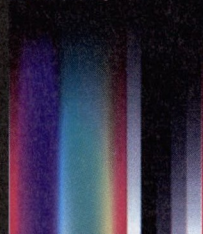
3dfx Voodoo3
3dfx32v3.dll (4.11.01.0441)
16bit color, (565-RGB)
3DMark Quality Test 6



Diamond Viper V770 for Win
UPRDX.DLL (4.10.01.0400)
32bit color, (888-RGB)
3DMark Quality Test 6



3dfx Voodoo3
3dfx32v3.dll (4.11.01.0441)
16bit color, (565-RGB)
3DMark Quality Test 4



Diamond Viper V770 for Windows 9
UPRDX.DLL (4.10.01.0400)
32bit color, (888-RGB)
3DMark Quality Test 4



16bit vs 32bit Multiplication

3dfx Voodoo3
3dfx32v3.dll (4.11.01.0441)
16bit color, (4444-RGBA)
3DMark Quality Test 5



Diamond Viper V770 for Windows 9
UPRDX.DLL (4.10.01.0400)
32bit color, (8888-RGBA)
3DMark Quality Test 5



16bit vs 32bit Bilinear Filtering

Although there are very real circumstances where a card fails quite miserably because of its own shortcomings, the early nature of the drivers account for a lot of the fluctuation. In particular, the Asus TNT2 card seemed to have the oldest of the Riva drivers and subsequently tended to have the lowest score.

The only exception to this is the Voodoo 3 range of cards which came fully packaged in the box with production drivers.

The Machine

All the cards were tested on a full Intel box consisting of a PII 350 and 64Mb RAM running Windows 98.

Voodoo 3 16 bit vs Riva TNT2 32 Bit

What better point to begin with than the most contentious argument that has surrounded the 3D community of late. That is, 32 bit colour vs 16 bit colour.

In what really came to a shock for Voodoo fans is 3dfx's suddenly lax attitude. This normally progressive "ahead of the pack" company have really allowed themselves to slacken off recently. In fact they've allowed Riva with the TNT/TNT2 to not only catch up to the Voodoo range of 3D accelerators, but to surpass them in terms of image quality. In particular, where the TNT and the TNT2 feature a full 32 bit colour palette for rendering, the Voodoo 3 still only renders at 16 bit. This equates to the TNT2 with a palette of 64 billion colours compared to 3dfx's palette of only 65,536 colours.

Subtle differences

3dfx's main response to this has been to claim that the Voodoo 3 moves so fast that it's virtually impossible to tell the difference between 16 bit colour and 32 bit colour. Although they have a good point, when a 3D app is moving at faster than 30 fps it can be difficult to tell the difference, but not impossible.

Even in a fast moving game, 32 bit colour seems richer, more lush, offering a

more intense glow. That's really the only way to describe the difference, the TNT2 is more intense and vibrant. To use a more natural analogy, the TNT2 is like viewing a sunset from the pristine outback, or similar unspoiled area. The Voodoo 3 on the other hand is like observing the same sunset from the confines of the city where pollution obscures the rich colours with a slight brownish grey haze. (Jere, you're a poet! - Ed).

Not one to simply make you all rely on my word, great pains have been taken to ensure the difference between the palettes has been captured. Although with some shots the colour difference should be blatantly obvious, it's worth remembering that the inking process (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black) used for paper printing (i.e. the Powerplay you're now reading) is different to the Electron process of a Cathode Ray Tube which uses Red, Green and Blue light to create colour. Ultimately it may be difficult to observe the discrepancy on paper, but I assure you that on a monitor the differences are quite clear.

Alpha blending

The first test that really highlights the difference between palettes is the 16 vs 32 bit colour alpha blending test. Where the Riva TNT2 offers an absolutely beautiful graduation of colours and a perfectly blended alpha map (the black to white haze over the colours), the Voodoo 3 is riddled with very poor gradation. On the Voodoo 3 the alpha map in particular is extraordinarily badly applied and you can easily see the "blocks" of black to white that's supposed to be a clean transition.

Another test that highlights the "dirtiness" of the 16 bit palette is the bilinear filtering test. Where the TNT2 offers a gorgeous array of colours perfectly flowing between the primaries of red green and blue, the Voodoo 3 is grainy and suffers from wavy artifacts caused by a lacking palette.

The Voodoo 3 does a little better in the colour multiplicative alpha blending test, at least the alpha blend actually resembles its true colour rival. However examining the areas that graduate from white to black and you can easily spot the artifacts and

3dfx Voodoo3
3dfx32v3.dll (4.11.01.0441)
16bit color, (565-RGB)
3DMark Quality Test 7



Diamond Viper V770 for Windows 9
UPRDX.DLL (4.10.01.0400)
32bit color, (888-RGB)
3DMark Quality Test 7



16bit vs 32bit Alpha blending

hashing caused by dithering to emulate 32 bit colour. As is the case with all the tests, the TNT2 result is perfect and identical to the Direct X desired result.

Dithering around

A test to definitely focus on, and one that I hope the print process does justice too, is the 16 vs 32 bit zoomed colour test. Where the TNT2 screams perfection the Voodoo 3 dithers the entire scene. Admittedly, and like 3dfx have stated, it is impossible to observe the dithered effects when an application is running at 30 fps and above. However at that speed it all equates to a 3dfx image that seems ultimately "less bright" and I'm sure it won't be long until an eager developer creates a 32 bit game with such wildly varied palettes and textures with which the Voodoo range of cards simply won't be able to contend.

The best example of all 3dfx's palette shortcomings is best displayed in the 16

vs 32 bit colour picture. Now at first examination the scenes look identical, however a little more investigation reveals how a lesser palette can effect the look of a game. Start by observing the sky and the ocean. On a monitor you can definitely tell there's a difference, particularly at the shoreline where the emulated blue on the 3dfx doesn't match the same blue from the TNT2. This is only a minor situation though. The real difference can be seen in the tests speedometer located at the bottom right. Observe the TNT2 and you will see per-

fectly gradated colours from red to green. Look at the same speedometer on the 3dfx and you can clearly see the inferior gradation. Remember, this screenshot is from one of the benchtests that runs at full speed - proving that there are situations where at 30fps a 16 bit palette can let the game down.

Doubling up

Of course what really matters is the performance cost of such an enhanced colour palette and this is where Riva with the TNT2 have pulled off a phenomenal feat. Examining the benchtest results you can see that the Voodoo 3 clocks in 3071 3D marks and the TNT2 at 2,989, only 82 marks behind or less than half a percent (.027 actually) difference overall.

What makes this a big deal? The fact that 32 bit colour requires twice as many bytes as 16 bit colour. In terms of pure bit throughput you could say that the TNT2 is almost running twice as fast as the Voodoo 3 because it's shifting twice the number of bytes yet clocking in at almost the same speed. Impressive!

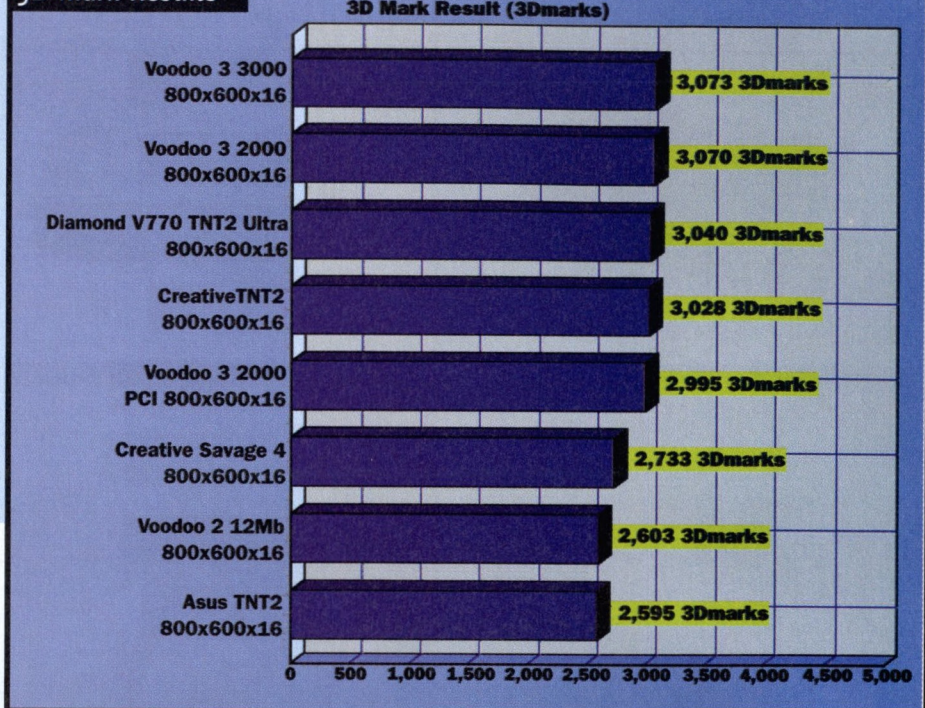
Relating this score into a frame per second scenario and although the Voodoo 3 comes out on top in both tests, the TNT2 (remember shifting twice the amount of data) in both situations is less than 1 frame per second behind. 3dfx have truly let the performance gap slip against their rivals.

Voodoo 3 vs TNT2 - Ultimate Reality

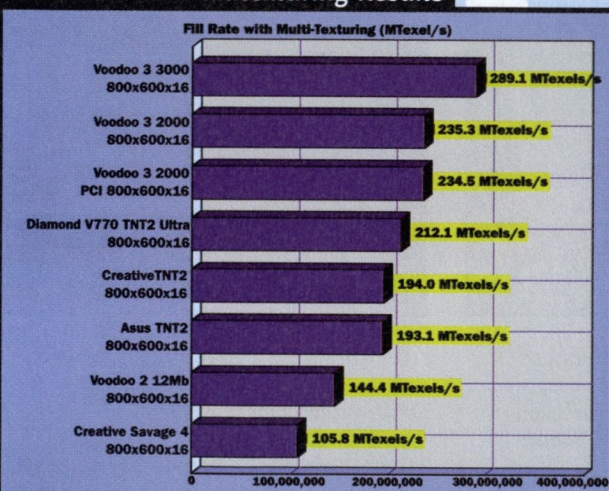
Something that's going to come as a surprise to all Voodoo fans is one test that really highlights not just one of the Voodoo 3's biggest shortcomings, but potentially reveals how 3dfx have managed to remain in front for so long - and it's not simply pure speed as might be expected.

The test revealing 3dfx's shame is the texture resolution test. One look and you can see immediately that the Voodoo 3 (all

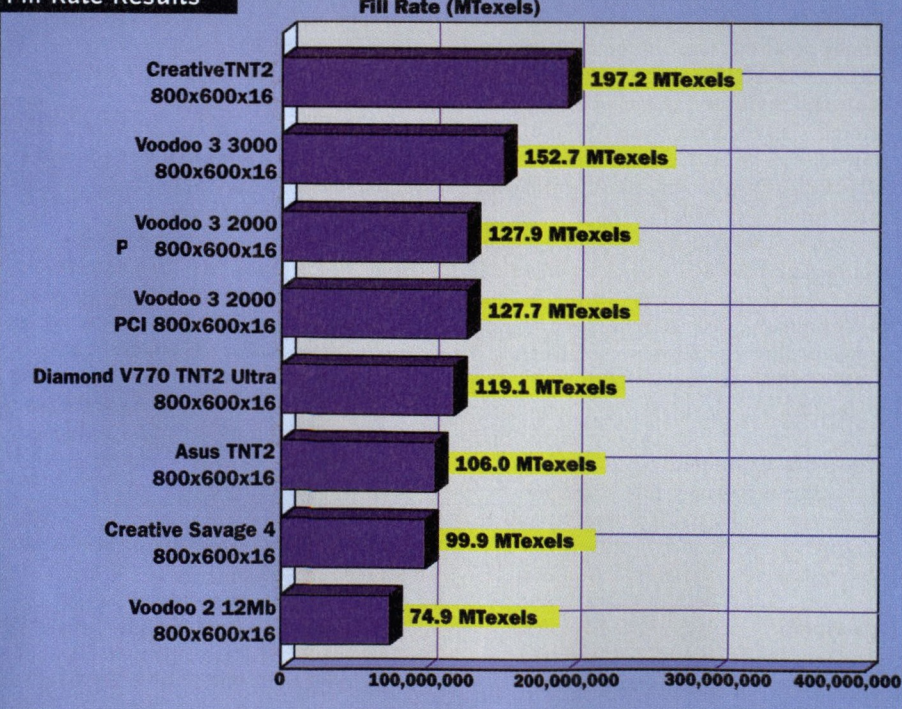
3D Mark Results



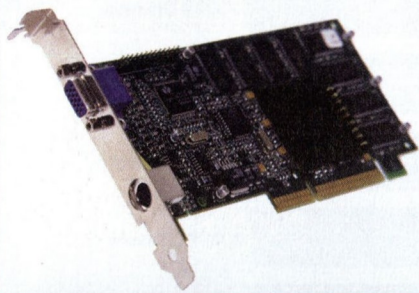
Fill Rate with Multitexturing Results



Fill Rate Results



VOODOO3 3000

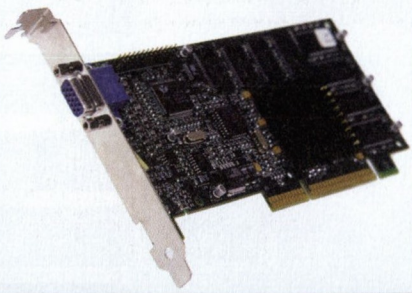


Voodoo's actually) are seriously deficient in the area of texture quality. Now it's been a fact for quite some time now that the Voodoo range of cards have had a considerably smaller maximum texture size than its Riva rival. This however is the first time we've been able to examine with a test just how deficient the 3Dfx is.

From a DirectX point of view a texture has been queued in memory and requires display through the accelerator. In the case of the TNT2 the texture comes through unharmed and in perfect detail. Examine what the Voodoo 3 did with the same texture and you can barely recognize it. What can we learn from this? Only one of 3Dfx's biggest secrets. A lot of the speed of the card comes not from raw power, but from cleverly reducing how much data needs to be moved in order to reach a similar effect.

In the case of colour the 3Dfx need only move half the number of bytes (16 bit vs 32 bit). In the case of textures, by dramatically reducing the maximum area or resolution, the Voodoo range of cards need only move a smaller amount of data. Working on the theory that a fast frame rate obscures these shortcuts, 3Dfx have been the proverbial smarty pants in their implementation. As every other card on the market, including the lesser Savage 4

VOODOO3 2000AGP



has a significantly larger maximum texture size than the Voodoo's, it's only a matter of time before a high resolution texture rich game alienates the Voodoo owners out there.

The purpose of these explanations, by the way, isn't meant to totally damn 3Dfx and the Voodoo range of cards. More to simply point out some of the clever tricks 3Dfx have implemented to make their cards still the fastest in the world. Overall, the Voodoo 3 3000 with the same clock rate as the TNT2 Ultra (166Mhz) and on an even keel with both cards running at 16 bit colour, the Voodoo 3 wins. In some tests the Voodoo 3 quite significantly smashes its opposition. It's ultimately going to come down to the consumer decision of speed vs image quality. Not an easy conclusion to come to at all, as I know that I'm still undecided.

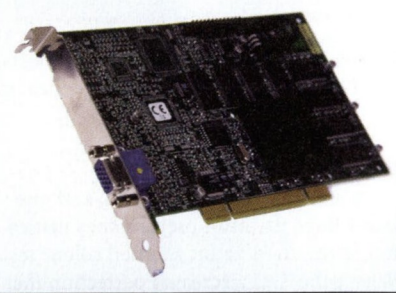
The Tests Explained

Located throughout this article are numerous graphs and figures pitting all the cards we've recently received against each other. Here's what it all means:

3D Marks

3D marks are calculated from the frame rates of the two Game Scenes.

VOODOO3 2000PCI



The 3D Mark Result ultimately shows how the 3D accelerator will generally perform in games.

Game Scenes 1 - frames per second

This test called "the race" uses single texturing (only one bitmap layer for each polygon) and shows how the card will perform in games using only one texture pass, such as Incoming, Turok or Forsaken.

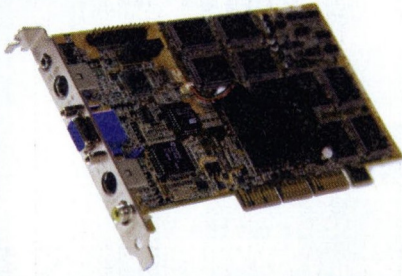
Game Scene 2 - frames per second

First Person games use dual texturing (two bitmaps for each polygon). In this case the dual texturing is used in the walls, which have a base texture and a shadow map on top of it and the weapon has a shiny reflection texture on top of the normal weapon texture. Multi-texturing has not been possible with DirectX until version 6.0. This test shows how the card will perform in terms of speed and quality for games that use several texture passes, such as Quake II and Unreal.

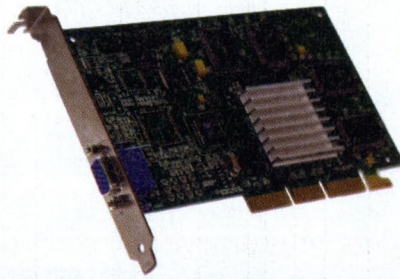
Fill Rate Tests - millions of texels per second

Fill Rate tests how quickly the 3D Accelerator is able to draw (fill) the screen. The higher the fill rate, the more depth complexity and better resolutions the card

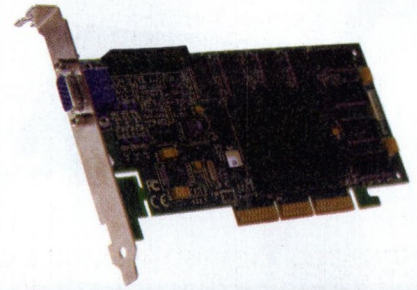
ASUS TNT2



CREATIVE TNT2



DIAMOND TNT2



can handle (think of the triangle example mentioned earlier).

Fill Rate with Multi-texturing uses the new DirectX6 multi-texturing features. If the hardware is capable of drawing more than one texture in one pass, this test will show it. Many modern games take advantage of Multi-texturing, for example, in creating dark shadow maps or bright reflection maps. If the hardware tested does not support multi-texturing, the test will revert to rendering the polygons as separate layers..

Texture Rendering Speed - frames per second

These tests show what kind of a frame-rate the 3D accelerator is able to maintain when the scene has different amounts of textures visible. The geometry of the scene is kept to a minimum.

Bump Mapping - frames per second

These tests show how fast the 3D accelerator is capable of doing emboss bump mapping.

Texture Filtering Speed - % of the speed of bi-linear filtering

The values of these tests are compared to the speed of mip-mapped bi-linear filtering. These tests show how much the

3D accelerator gets slowed down by using tri-linear or anisotropic filtering. The point sample texture filtering shows if the accelerator would be any faster without any filtering.

For example, if the point sample texture filtering speed returned 110%, then it would be 10% faster than bilinear filtering. If, on the other hand, Anisotropic filtering returned a result of 95% then that would be a great result, as the accelerator is rendering a far superior filtering method with only a 5% loss in performance.

n Pixel Polygons - thousands of polygons per second

The n Pixel Polygon test results show what is the 3D accelerator's theoretical speed in drawing polygons of a certain size.

A 6 pixel polygon is a lot smaller than a 1000 pixel polygon and subsequently more would need to be rendered on screen. The faster an accelerator is in the 6 pixel polygon test, the more polygons it can handle from the processor. Subsequently, the accelerator that renders the 1000 pixel polygon test faster is the one with the best polygon fill rate.

THE TESTS

Tested - 3dfx Voodoo 3

Voodoo 3 2000 at 143Mhz with 16Mb

Powerbench 2D: 155.864

Powerbench 3D: 299.508

Powerbench overall: 227.686

Voodoo 3 2000 PCI at 143Mhz with 16Mb

Powerbench 2D : 155.864

Powerbench 3D : 299.508

Powerbench overall: 227.686

Voodoo 3 3000 at 166Mhz with 16Mb

Powerbench 2D : 156.614

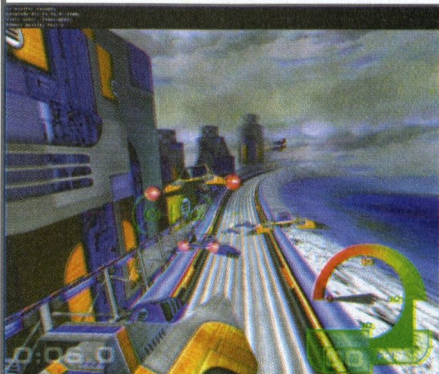
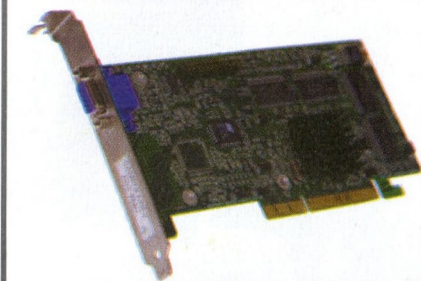
Powerbench 3D : 313.284

Powerbench Overall : 234.949

Pure speed

Despite the commentary I made before, I concur that 3dfx have managed to again develop a 3D accelerator that leads the pack when it comes to pure speed. In fact the Voodoo 3's offer considerably improved performance over the Voodoo 2 and incredible improvements over the original Voodoo card.

SAVAGE 4



The V3 2000 - comparative performance

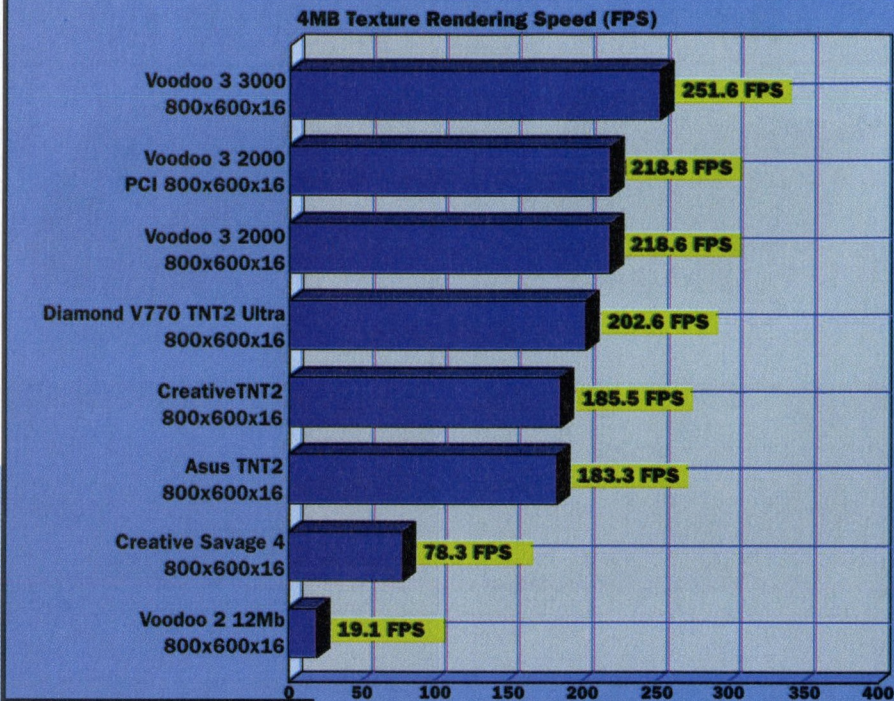
Using comparison tests (Powerbench) of which we have records for previous cards from over 2 years back we can observe how far the Voodoo range has progressed.

For example, the V3 2000 (AGP and PCI) have a fill rate twice as fast as the Voodoo 2 and four times as fast as the original Voodoo. Polygon throughput is three times faster than the original Voodoo and about 170% faster than a Voodoo 2. Most amazing however are polaric operations and texture manipulation which are 10.5 times faster than an original Voodoo, and almost six times faster than a Voodoo 2.

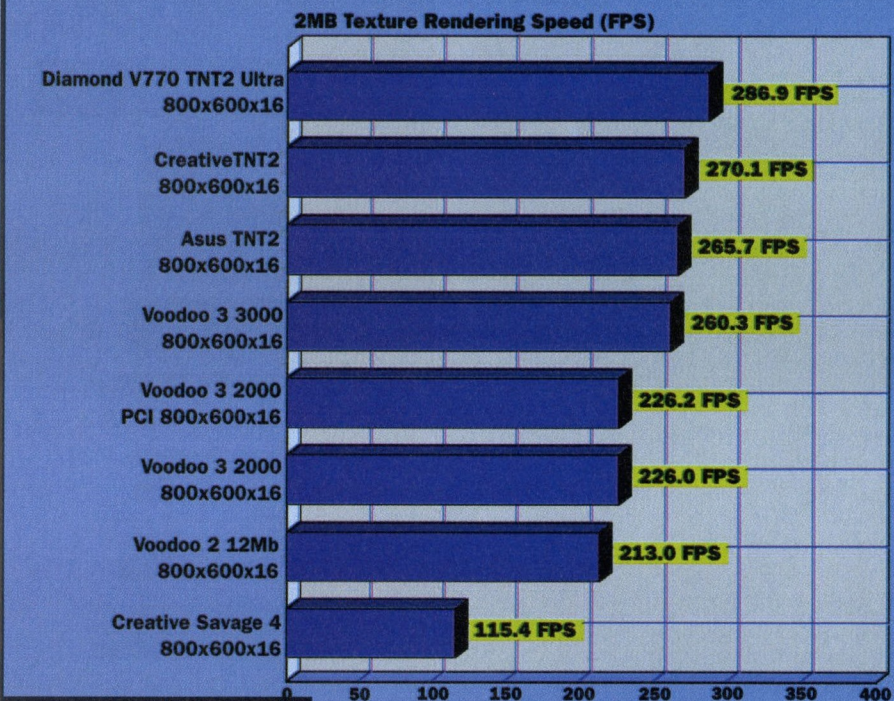
The V3 3000 - comparative performance

It's interesting what a faster core can do. In the case of the V3 3000 you're really only going to see faster fill rates, or smoother frame rates at a higher resolution. The fill rate on a V3000 is actually 5 times faster than the original Voodoo and 250% faster than a Voodoo 2. Quite a significant difference really.

On the other hand, polygon throughput of the V3000 vs the V2000 doesn't receive as significant a speed boost, only about 25% but still nothing to be sneezed at.



Texture Rendering 4Mb



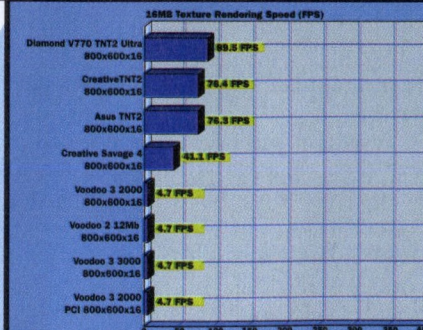
Texture Rendering 2Mb

One of the more interesting inclusions of the Voodoo 3 range of cards is hardware DVD playback and TV out. Well, all the pre-release V3 hype claimed hardware DVD. After spending way too long scouring the driver discs for signs of a software DVD player or Win 98 media player drivers, I gave up in frustration.

We've got the DVD drive, we've even got a DVD title and are itching to test the quality on a Voodoo 3, but sadly couldn't. This aspect of the cards performance will have to wait until further scrutiny allows us to get it functioning. Make sure to check Graphics Tech for regular updates on 3rd generation hardware performance.

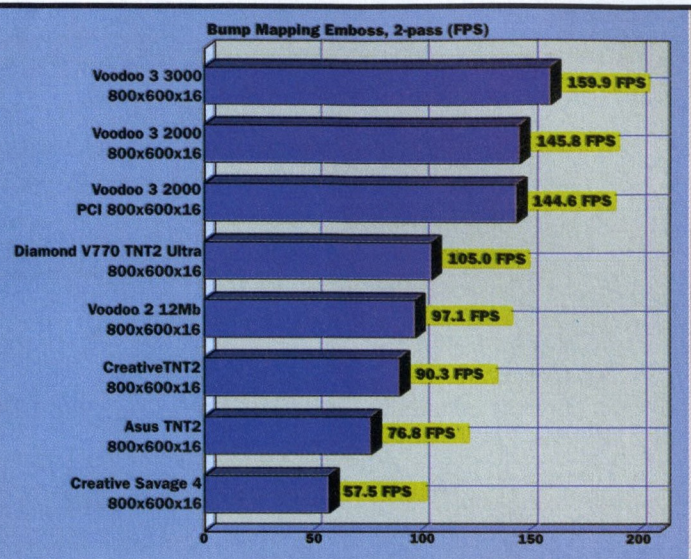
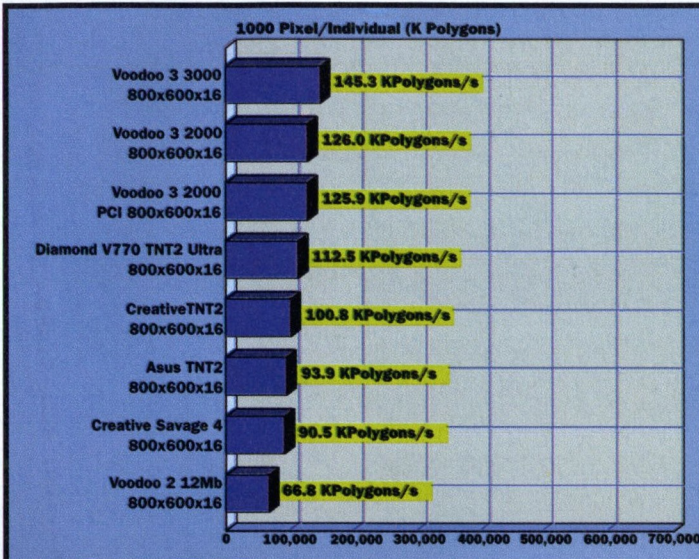
3dfx Overall

Sure the Voodoo 3 is essentially two Voodoo 2's in SLI conveniently lumped



Texture Rendering 16Mb

onto an AGP card, but that's the whole point. It is conveniently lumped onto an AGP card, and that's great. No more waste of two PCI slots, no messy SLI cables to get in the way, just pure speed at a resolution up to 1600x1200.



Pixel Polygons Results

The astute eye will notice that testing only went up to 1280x1024. There's a very good reason for this, that's the maximum resolution my monitor can go to and I would think the majority of people as well. 1600x1200 is an exciting resolution but is going to need a modern 20/21" monitor to run it.

The question then remains if a Voodoo 2 owner needs to upgrade to a Voodoo 3? The answer is yes. Firstly the Voodoo 3 3000 with its faster fill rate can render scenes at 800x600 (the maximum resolution of a Voodoo 2) 100% faster than the Voodoo 2. Even the V3 2000 at 800x600 renders 75% faster. Essentially the Voodoo 3's are going to allow developers to create more complex scenes at higher or equivalent resolutions. It should also be noted that games running at a higher resolution are more stunning, curves are rounder, lines are less jagged and the scenes are more pleasing overall.

Glide Is Dead

Of course the biggest advantage that the Voodoo chipset offers is compatibility with the 3dfx proprietary API Glide. Once upon a time because of increased development and support for Glide, 3dfx was the only choice even if a better card existed. This is definitely not the case today.

Firstly, to the shock of Microsoft haters everywhere, the reality is that these days DirectX6/6.1 is considerably faster than Glide. Glide was great back in the days of DirectX3 and 5 but seriously lags now. In particular Glide seems to really falter at higher resolutions. Play a game that offers Glide and DirectX support, especially at a resolution of 1024x768, and DirectX kicks Glides butt in terms of performance.

Perhaps it's a memory issue, but on the 64Mb PII 350 at 1024x768 Glide would occasionally stutter. It was unpredictable and sometimes would go quite a while without stuttering, other times it would happen almost continuously. Running the same game with DirectX however would result in no stutter at all plus the added advantage of being able to render at

1280x1024. Every Glide app I tested stopped at 1024x768.

Glide thankfully is dead. Now we can concentrate on the best card and conveniently use an "OPEN" API to render our games.

Tested - Riva TNT2

Guillemot Xentor at 166Mhz with 16Mb

Powerbench 2D : 159.833
Powerbench 3D : 343.07
Powerbench overall: 251.452

Diamond V770 TNT2 Ultra at 166Mhz with 32Mb

Powerbench 2D : 158.88
Powerbench 3D : 382.85
Powerbench overall : 270.865

Creative TNT2 at XXXMhz with XXMb Memory

Powerbench 2D : 153.418
Powerbench 3D : 283.681
Powerbench overall : 218.549

Bump Mapping Results

Asus TNT2 at 125/150Mhz with 16Mb

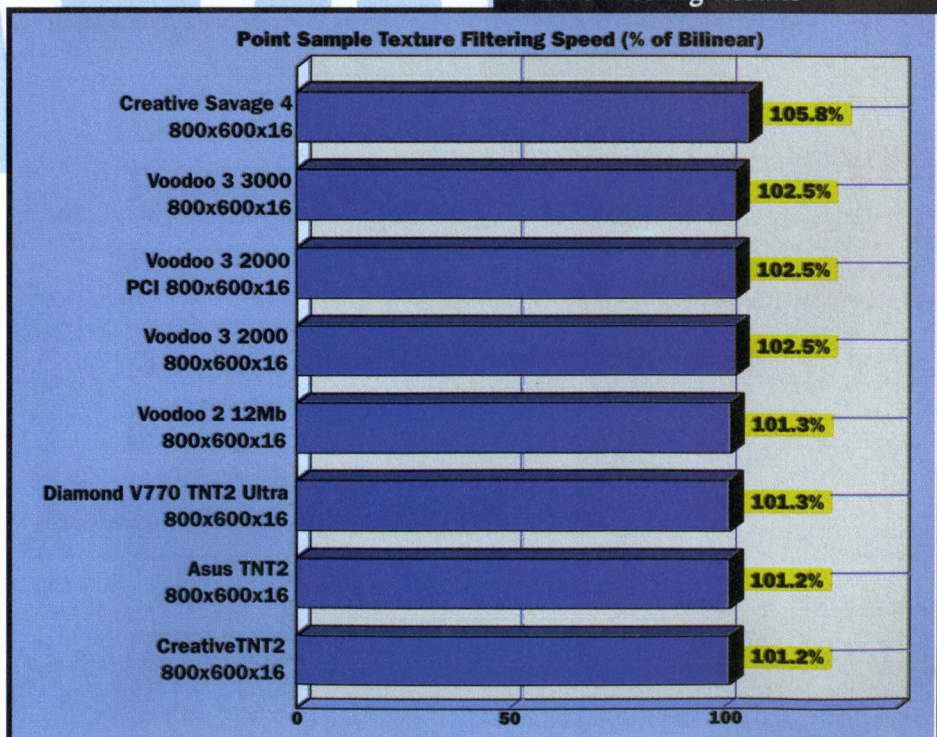
Powerbench 2D : 155.146
Powerbench 3D : 252.707
Powerbench overall: 203.926

Itchy benchmark

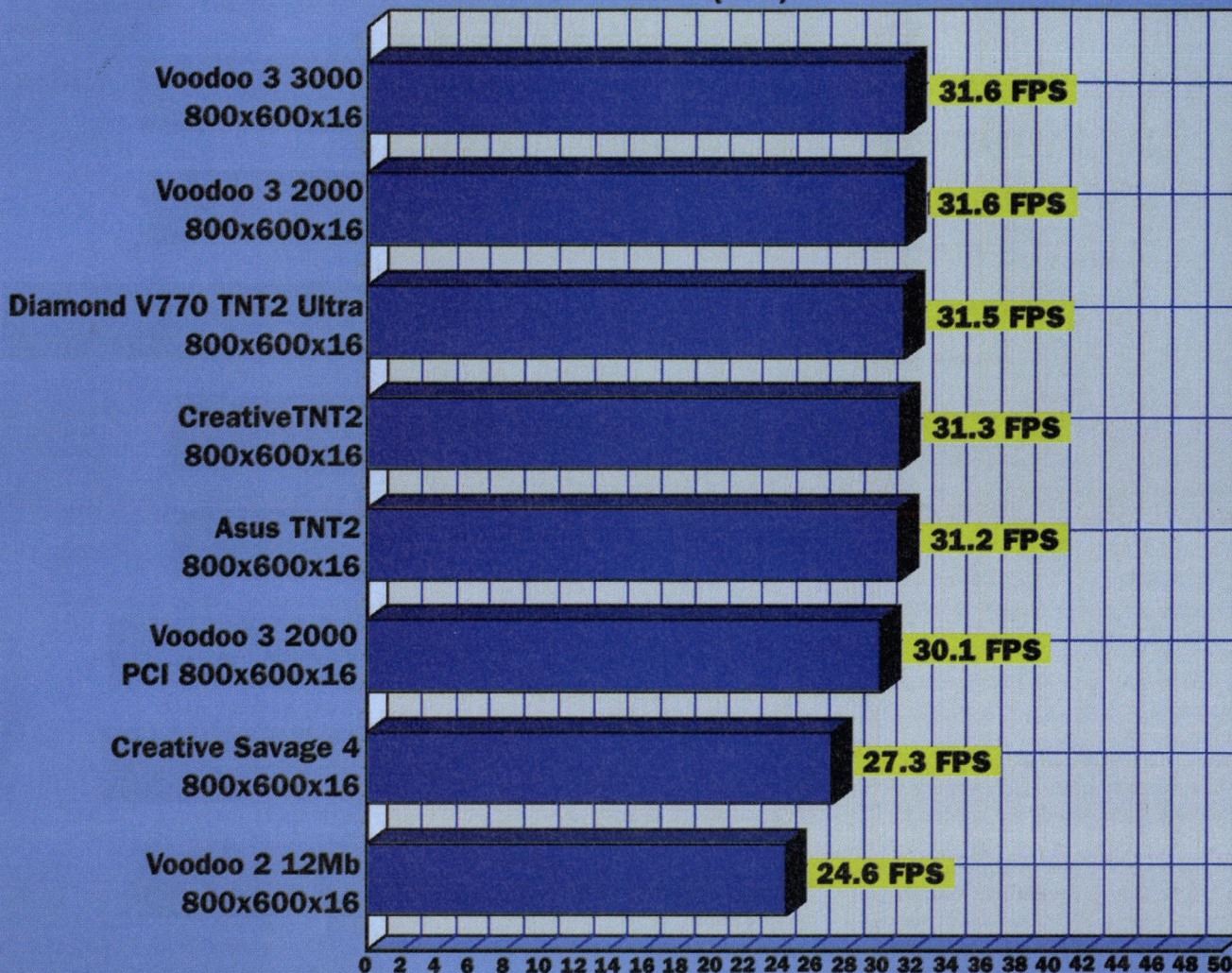
The first thing to notice in regard to the TNT2 tests is the inclusion of the Guillemot Xentor 32, which hasn't made its way into any of the graphs. The reason for this is that we didn't have the card long enough to fully 3D Mark it (our software license to unlock 3D Mark arrived after we had to return the Guillemot card).

I have a lot of time for Guillemot, my Maxi gamer Voodoo 2 has served me well the last year and a half. It's actually quite a shame that we couldn't include the Xentor 32 in the overall tests as there's something very special about the card. Although this is most likely a case of Guillemot having the most ready drivers, some of the Powerbench figures such as polygon

Texture Filtering Results



First Person Game (FPS)



First Person Game Results



throughput place the Xentor 32 well in front of the other cards, including the Diamond Viper V770 which has a much faster 166MHz core.

Where the Voodoo 3's average 1050 polygons per millisecond, the Xentor 32 managed to hit 1473 polygons per millisecond. Even the V770 didn't reach this, making only 1255 polygons per millisecond. The Guillemot 166MHz TNT2 is definitely something I'm itching to benchmark.

Big deal

A note about Powerbench: it's possible from the figures to assume that the TNT2's, and in particular the Xentor 32, is faster than the Voodoo 3's. This isn't entirely true. I wrote Powerbench back when 2Mb of texture memory on a video

card was a big deal and subsequently Powerbench only really tests at that level.

3D Mark 99 Max, which is our newly adopted benchmarking suite, tests the advanced features of modern 3D accelerators to a much deeper level including anisotropic filtering and 2 - 32Mb texture throughput. Powerbench however is great for seeing how much faster modern accelerators are when compared to the original 3Dfx Voodoo, the reference point for Powerbench being the Orchid Voodoo.

Similarly, where the drivers for the Xentor allow it to really shine, some consideration for the Asus TNT2 should be given as it's unlikely to perform as badly as the results imply. I can definitely confirm that the Asus card had the oldest of the TNT2 drivers.

And TV too

To the Asus card's advantage however is the list of added functionality it brings to the TNT2 chipset. Like the Asus TNT, the Asus TNT2 features TV in (super VHS at that) and TV out. TV in is a great function as it allows you to sit there working on the computer whilst watching TV in a little window. It's great for those times when you want to surf the net and check out the tele at the same time.

TV out on a TNT2 is also quite a handy

function as the TNT2's can play DVD. On all cards DVD playback was definitely acceptable and perfectly watchable with the only downside being the occasional jerk or "stuck" artifact, the DVD format moving just a fraction faster than the card could display in some situations.

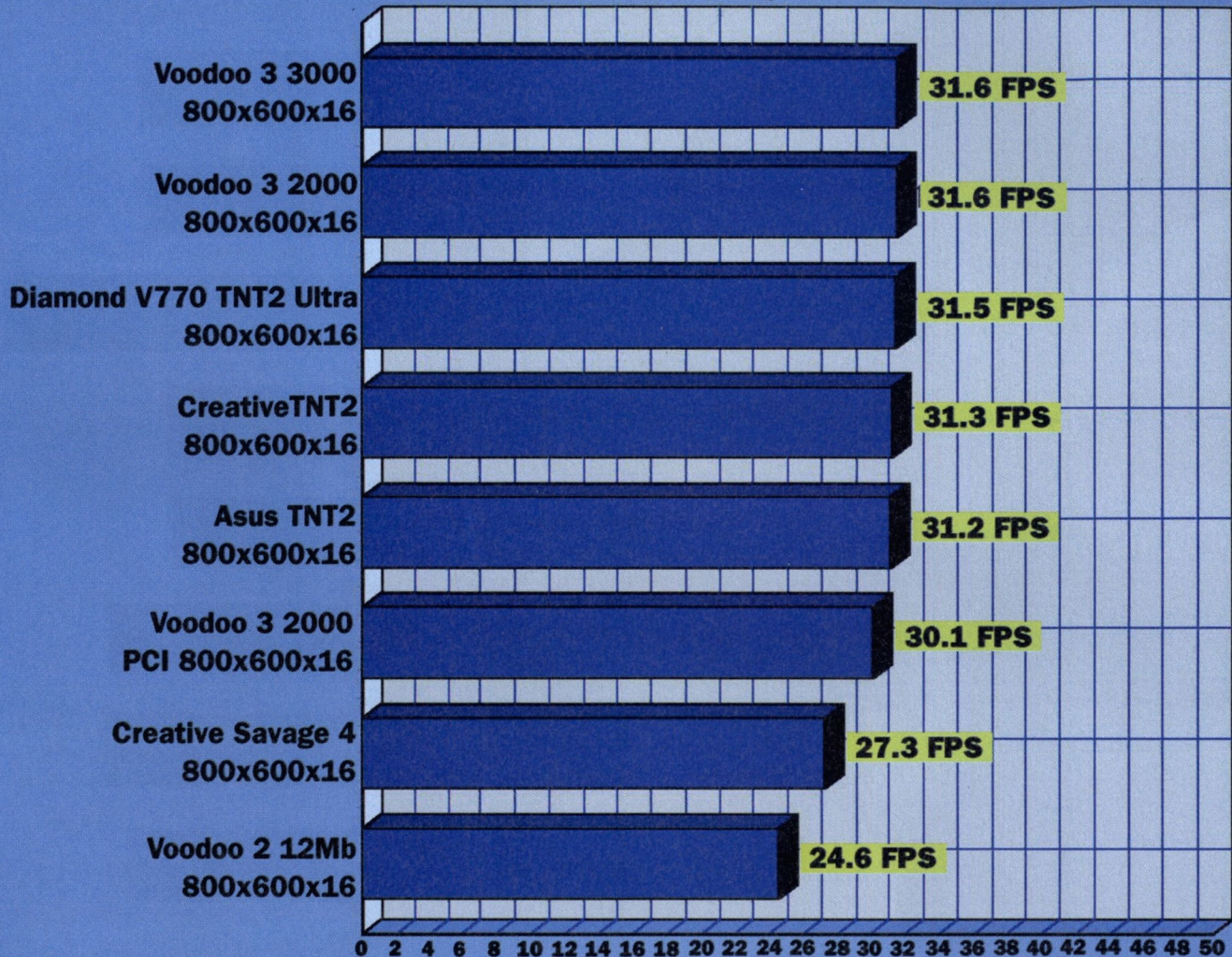
The only exception to this was the Viper V770 which really benefited from the faster core. DVD playback on the Diamond card was great with much less artifacting than the other TNT2 cards.

The TNT2 can definitely handle larger textures more capably than the Voodoo 3, particularly in the realm of 8 and 16Mb texture textures. Here the TNT2 absolutely blitzes the Voodoo 3, offering 87.9 fps with the Diamond V770 (which is even twice as fast as the close TNT2 rival) compared to the Voodoo 3's paltry 9.6 fps.

When it comes to feature set, the TNT2 chipset definitely offers numerous advantages over the Voodoo 3. 32 bit colour, anisotropic filtering and single pass bumpmapping and embossing with coloured lights are all functions the TNT2 performs very quickly, whereas they aren't even included on the Voodoo boards. Based purely on technology the TNT2 is the superior chipset.

Also to the credit of the TNT2 chipset is that even with all the extra functionality,

First Person Game (FPS)



Driving Game Results



larger colour palettes, better quality texturing and management it always manages to give the Voodoo 3's a real run for their money. In many cases the difference in performance is negligible which really places the TNT2 in front.

Tested - Creative Savage 4 with 16Mb

Powerbench : failed

S3 has always been a company that caters to the OEM and smaller distribution markets. Walk into any corner PC shop and chances are you'll see an S3 card. The Savage 4 is S3's latest offering and, although in overall performance doesn't make the top three, it definitely showed stunning performance in certain tests.

For all the talk of texture compression and the "controversy" that originally surrounded it, texture compression certainly hasn't harmed the card's reputation. In fact, the procedure has worked reliably and, as can be observed from the Savage screenshots, it can render a scene quite capably.

Actually, as the Savage 4 can render in 32 bit, even with texture compression it offers an advantage over the Voodoo 3, purely because of the superior palette.

To the Savage 4's credit this card actually managed to beat the Voodoo 3's and TNT2's when it came to point sample filtering (point sampling is the filtering method before bilinear (like how bilinear is before trilinear, which is before anisotropic)).

The Savage 4 also came out ahead in trilinear filtering. It even beat the Voodoo 3 for polygon throughput, not bad at all for a "budget" card. The Voodoo 3 does eventually surpass the Savage 4 when the polygons count is reduced and fill rate comes into play. But whilst the polygons are 6 pixels each (meaning there's a lot of them) the Savage 4 can address them the most effectively of all the accelerators.

Other advantages the Savage 4 offers over the Voodoo 3 range of cards is a full 32 bit colour palette. Although it may not be as fast, the Savage 4 won't ever be excluded from a 32 bit only game.

Conclusion

Remember this has been a first look at the new 3rd generation accelerator technology and subsequently we're not aiming to endorse one card over the other. One thing that is clear irrespective of drivers and numbers however is the war between 3dfx and Riva is about speed vs quality.

This is what it really comes down to. The Voodoo 3 3000 is a fast card and does consistently win the highest 3D Mark at differing resolutions. On the other hand, as can be seen from the image tests, the TNT2 is a far superior card in texture filtering, texture management, texture memory and colour palette, making it the most visually impressive of the duo.

To the TNT2's advantage however is that even with all the extra functionality it benches very closely to the Voodoo 3. For this reason I'm leaning considerably more towards the TNT2. To my eyes, the difference in image quality between 32 and 16 bit colour is far more noticeable than the marginal difference in speed.

Jere Lawrence

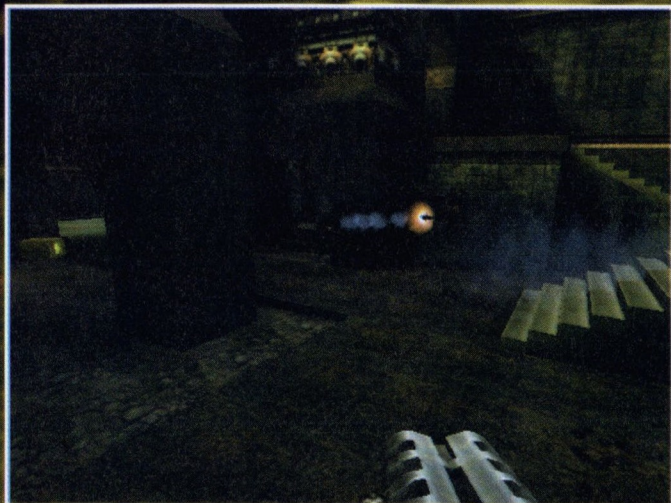
(I would like to add a very special thanks to Wade Baker whose assistance in testing this myriad of cards in the short time offered was greatly appreciated.)



PREVIEWS

Q3: ARENA TEST RELEASE

The only test in the world that people have actually looked forward to...



The delivery of the news induced two radically different emotions. One, the heading of "Q3TEST Released" made gamers worldwide jump for joy. People sent messages to their friends, phoned their workmates, hugged family members, relatives and pet dogs, praying and giving thanks to their chosen god. Many neglected to read the line that followed - the three dreaded words that struck fear, dejection and disbelief into the hearts and souls of PC gamers worldwide: "For.....The.....Macintosh."

Not-so-silent majority

It made them cringe, their mouths attempting to masticate then swallow a rotten taste (the one similar to where you wake up after an LAN without brushing your teeth, your breath smelling of a contorted, amalgam of pizza and Coca-Cola). Many believed that id had let them down - that they had neglected the majority, that they had neglected the people that have followed their games with a cult passion since the days of Wolfenstein and Doom. Most, for the first time ever, were jealous and envious of Macintosh users. The news left them scarred for weeks, and many are still emotionally distraught. A contrite majority took the release date of "soon after" to mean anything up to two days. Instead, Win32 users had to wait weeks to get their taste of the Arena. They feasted on screenshot upon screenshot, scrimmaged around through movies - nothing satisfying their desire until the test itself was made available.

The Holy Trinity

The thoughts shared between Mac, Linux and Windows users are still divided - though one game, one goal binds us - to help in the creation of a premiere game. The Test is more than just Quake 3: Arena. It gives us, the gamers, a chance to shape what is to be the most comprehensive multiplayer deathmatch experience in history. A game that will display some of the most sophisticated, ferocious and flexible artificial intelligence yet to be seen in a computer game. One look at the architecture of the levels, the detail of the models,

the quality of the lighting and lens flares, and the diverse arsenal of weaponry within Q3TEST will convince you of the power of the Trinity engine and how awesome the release of Q3:A will be.

Arenas, not maps

The Q3TEST version offered two deathmatch arenas and a selection of weapons for your playtesting pleasure. Q3TEST1 is a "Lost Hallways" (q2dm4) type level and, visually, allows you to test some of the engine's features. Portal technology, bezier curves, and an array of lighting effects resident within the map serve to provide a degree of eye-candy. The arena brings back what many believe to be a welcome addition - the gothic/pagan style elements that were resident in Doom and Quake. Pentagrams, totems, spiked characters and other such entities are scattered throughout as a subliminal complement to the action-packed gameplay.

For those who are yet to search the internet and play some of the user-made maps that have been created for both Quake and Quake 2, the Q3TEST2 arena will provide a fresh change and an enjoyable new experience.

Q3TEST2 is an arena that requires fresh, new tactics and trials a player's flick-rail ability through the selection of "bounce pads" scattered throughout. Although consisting of only squarish architecture throughout most of the map, Test2 pushes what has been the inhibitor for previous first person shooters created by id - outdoor areas. Bounce pads gravitate players in all directions, with mid-air kills becoming common place (rather than a rarity) - which is definitely a good thing. Q3TEST2 already epitomises a variety in level design and reveals a level of genius from Brandon James, Tim Willits and Christian Antkow that had only been hinted at previously.

Smooth predictions

The release of the test is primarily centred around the examination of Q3:A's network code. The client side prediction has been exponentially improved - even with pings of 500ms, smooth gameplay was consistently experienced. Playing over a five



person LAN found consistent pings of oms for three machines, while the other two moved between about eight and eighteen milliseconds - an improvement of at about 12-15ms over the Quake2 networking ability. I was extremely impressed - though as always, nothing is perfect.

Good and bad

Understanding the fact that the Q3TEST was released as a platform for network code experimentation does little to shun the fact that the little things that could have made the test so much more presentable and significantly more enjoyable were neglected. Features such as rail-trail customisation, player identification, console/menu/talking speech bubbles, top-right-corner time limit displays, crowd comments/cheering, the players head residing within a highly readable, easily identifiable HUD, a realistic player model, bounce-pads, neat lighting effects, visually pleasing armour shards, fantastic portal technologies and a nice array of weaponry induced excitement - there's no doubting that. Though as with all things in life (and lets face it - Quake is my life), the bad does tend to get noticed over what is to be the expected. It becomes apparent over what is considered the standard or "the norm."

Circus ArenaAcrobatics?

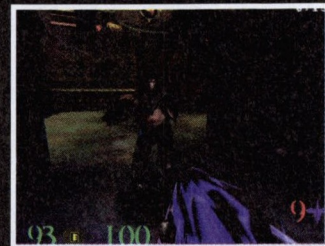
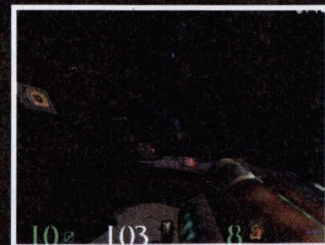
It crashed the first time I booted it up (hey, it could have happened to any program) but once inside the game I was confronted with a funky "Q3:TEST" background screen that I knew was advertising something special. I searched out the player setup menu in an effort to customise my controls, change my name, and set my player class, model and skin. It was here that the first disappointment was confronted. One class, one



model, two skins - your standard blue or red. I think I almost cried (though the model was animated extremely well and performed funky back-flips). Also lacking were a selection of powerups or any indication of what they are likely to be, as only the personal teleporter and quad damage were included. Originally I was sceptical about the inclusion of a teleporting device but it fits into the game and is relatively inconspicuous - as with the quad damage, let's just say it's as beautiful as you've been seeing in the screenshots for the last three months.

Weapon gyration

Entering the arena using a one-button Macintosh mouse (that's what I call climactic annoyance!), I searched for weapons so as to test their firing rates, damage levels, aesthetic appeal and, of course, how cool they are! Much to my delight, the shotgun is beautiful, the machinegun tasty and the plasma cannon outstanding. The performance of both the rocket launcher and railgun however was disappointing to say the least. The arguments that gyrate



the balance of these two weapons are likely to continue right up until the official shelf release of the game. Personally, I believe the firing rate of the railgun needs to be slightly decreased while the damage level has risen to a point where a player using the medium player class (with a default health count) would die from one shot. The trail from the weapon, although fairly aesthetic, lacks the structure of its predecessor. The circular entities need to be a different colour and the trail itself should remain for an extra third of the time (thus making it easier to identify snipers).

Rockets rule

Although ocularly satisfying, the actual blast from a rocket is a pathetic 2D sprite type setup (something that I thought id were trying to deviate from - the blast from Quake2's rocket launcher held more appeal for me) - a blast like the one from Shogo: MAD would have been befitting; a blast that expands from its infliction point and actually shows the sphere of damage in higher, clarified detail (yes, I agree that the lighting



effects are pretty enough). To maintain an equilibrium, id should either slow the rockets down or make the railgun more effective, otherwise it will be rendered entirely useless and Q3:A will fall into the same trap as Quake did - a game dominated by the rocket launcher.

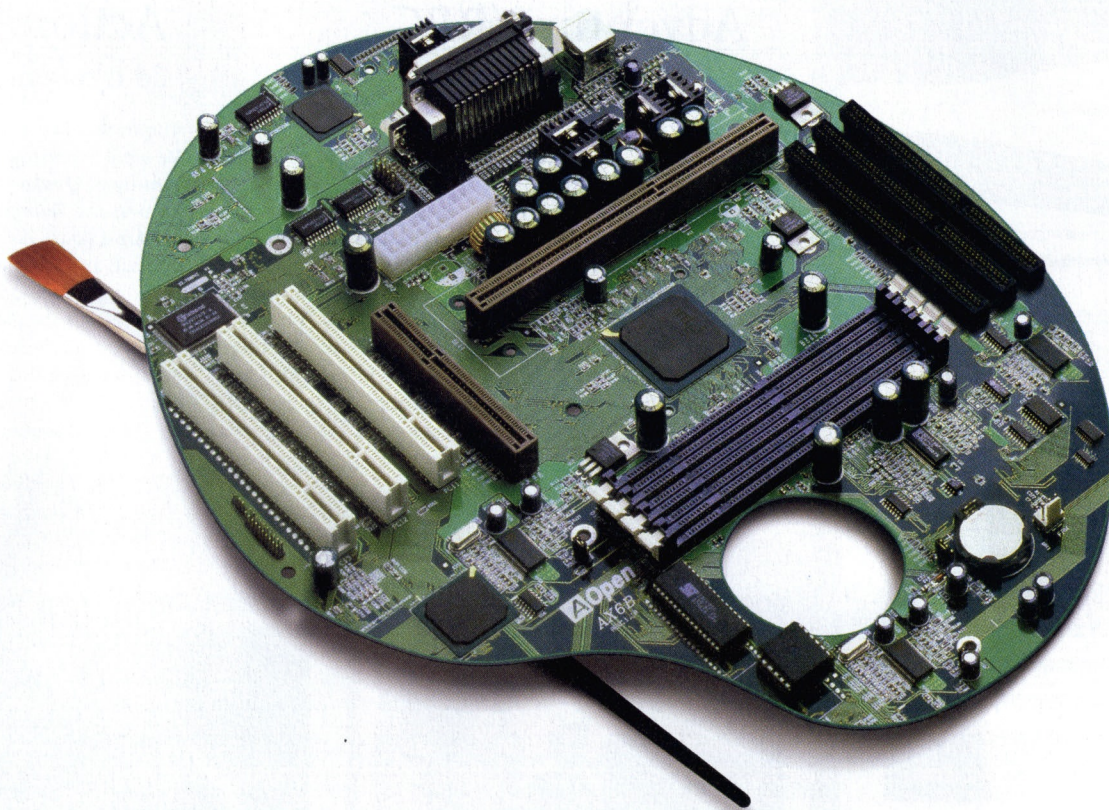
Work to be done

My primary concern for Quake 3: Arena was about speed - there isn't enough. The medium class (the one included) needs to be sped up slightly more - running around felt slower than the movement in Quake2! Remember though, that the pace of the game is likely to increase with the inclusion of the light player class. Combine the speed factor with the toned down railgun firing-rate and you'll realise why my deathmatch perception turned out to be one that I would describe as slightly lacklustre. The recycled sound effects, although bringing a smile, need to be balanced between the old and the new for the final release. At least eight player models have been seen in screenshots (many in gameplay shots), so why was only one included within the release?

Hopefully, id will get their act together and release another, more comprehensive test version within the next two months. This test needs to contain the weapon arsenal in its entirety (please, please bring back the chainsaw), four deathmatch arenas (even if some are conversions of Quake/Quake 2 classics), and one model for each of the intended light, medium and heavy classes. From here a logical analysis and evaluated critique will be able to be executed. Id have proven to the world that their network code is outstanding; now please, can we concentrate on the gameplay elements?

Elih Brading





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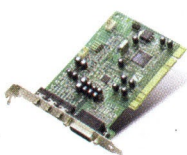
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STATE OF PLAY

The lowdown on the latest in your favourite genre

Adventure/RPG

David Wildgoose

WHAT I'M WAITING FOR:
System Shock 2 - September
Deus Ex - December
Ultima Ascension - October

Sick of the usual range of elves, dwarves and humans in virtually every RPG you play? How would you like to take to the skies as a fire-breathing, spell-casting dragon instead? Combining RPG, strategy and action elements (and who isn't these days?), *Dragon Hoard* will have you terrorising or aiding local villages, accumulating great swags of treasure and vying for the rule of the land with a host of other equally scaly and winged beasts. Of course the big question is whether Blue Fang Games will be able to incorporate



realistic dragon flying physics in time for the release early next year.

Another forthcoming game that has you indulging your bestial inclinations is ASC's *Werewolf: The Apocalypse*. Portentous title aside, this ought to be a game capable of giving you a hefty fright. Or, at least, should allow you to give others a hefty fright. The eponymous hero can morph through three forms - human, wolf and werewolf - as he battles to redeem his soul in a world based upon the White Wolf game system. Like the mighty *Deus Ex*, *Werewolf* also exploits the power of the Unreal engine.

Soulbringer, from UK house Gremlin, taps a similar vein of darkness in its gothic tale of necromancy, demon lords and none-more-grim scenery. The third-person view is more interesting than most due to the 3D nature of the world. The developers are suggesting they can provide the depth of interaction found in an Ultima game, but we'll wait and see.

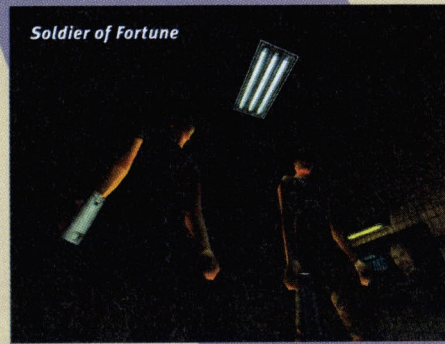
And, finally, gamers with longer memories than I will be pleased to hear that *Wizardry* isn't dead. Although it's sporting some severe flesh wounds, the much-troubled eighth instalment in the series has managed to survive the death of Sir-Tech. Apparently Topware has claimed the publisher rights in Europe, yet no deals have been struck for the US. What this means for us I've no idea, but the fact that the game's still in development is nonetheless reassuring in a small way.

Action

Ed Dawson

Well, this month was just a painful series of letdowns. We were expecting a mindblowing double-whammy of *Quake 3 Arena* (www.idsoftware.com) and *Teamfortress 2: Brotherhood of Arms* (www.sierrastudios.com/games/teamfortress/), and what we got instead was an 'industry opinion' that *Quake 3* is pushed back to November, and *Teamfortress 2* was similarly set way back in the year, to sometime around October! Talk about a let-down!

Quake 3 may reach us sooner, especially the way genius id software programmer John Carmack is talking. Apparently all they have left to code is the bulk of the hardware compatibility issues, to make it work with a million different 3D accelerators, and of course



the id guys themselves have said nothing directly about release dates besides the noble "when it's done". There may yet be pre-Christmas hope.

In the meantime Valve's free add-on to *Half-Life*, *Teamfortress Classic* (www.sierrastudios.com/games/tfclassic/) is enjoying massive popularity on internet servers. This month it rivalled even the brilliant *Starsiege Tribes*, which has been the hands-down favourite since it was launched a few months back. Look out for the Bill Gates look-alike "President" model in the scenario "the hunted", where bodyguards and assassins compete over the uncannily familiar monopolistic software CEO, who is controlled by one player. Coincidence? - we think not. At any rate, here's your chance to blow his head off with a 50 calibre sniper rifle...whoever he is.

Another cool game nearing completion is the much-lauded *Soldier of Fortune*, (www.soldier-of-fortune.com/) a stylish, ultra-realistic military combat sim from Raven software, of Heretic and Hexen fame. Satisfying visceral effects seem to be the crux of their focus, like splashy material-based effects in walls where bullets strike and facial expressions of enemies changing in realtime with their state of mind.

Insanely gory detail is another feature they are devoting a lot of effort towards, and they're not mucking around! Almost too much effort, it looks like.

At any rate there's some fine gameplay theories there too, so the end result will definitely be worth checking out.

Strategy

Brett Robinson

Current Game Versions:

Total Annihilation: 3.1
Starcraft: 1.04
Age of Empires: 1.0b
Myth 2: v1.2
Alpha Centauri: 3.0

With the release of this year's big names in strategy gaming imminent (thanks to E3), news on these titles is rather sparse. However, fantasy strategy gamers will be stoked with this month's coverage. Berkeley Systems have announced the development of **Orcs: Revenge of the Ancient**. The game is set in Middle-earth, the world created by J.R.R. Tolkien in his Lord of the Rings series. The player takes on the role of an Orc Chieftain



tasked with restoring order in his troubled domain during the Third Age War of the Rings. The developers have incorporated several unique facets of existing game genres into this fantasy-based strategy title. Orc warriors must be raised and trained in order to prepare them for battle. Well-trained orcs experience increases in intelligence, strength and dexterity. However, to maintain these levels they must be continually trained in both arena and field combat. Orcs also possess individual personalities; a factor which will have to be taken into consideration when assigning them combat roles. Due out late this year, Orcs: Revenge of the Ancient is one to watch very closely.

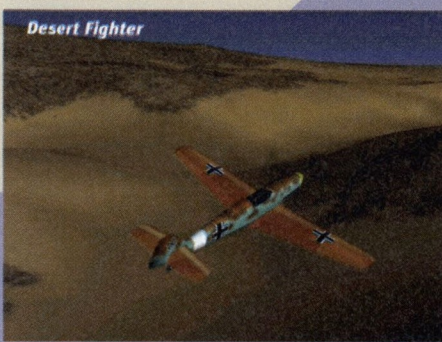
SSG has broken with tradition and is transforming the popular **Warlords** series into an RTS game. **Warlords: Battlecry** features nine distinct races, differing hero races and sixteen hero classes. The story-based campaign is divided into six chapters. Each chapter will reflect the Good or Evil alignment of the player. A comprehensive magic system with over eighty spells is also being implemented. **Warlords: Battlecry** introduces some relatively new features, with the player able to retain individual heroes or whole armies for use in future battles. Resource management of traditional commodities like gold, ore, stone and crystals is automatically handled by the AI as territory is captured. This enables the player to focus on the combat aspect of the game. **Battlecry's** visuals are nothing short of spectacular. The game is almost guaranteed to be a hit when it is released in October.

Sims

Maj. Ian Lindgren

The heat is on! Dynamix have just made a strike announcement that the long awaited sequel to the Aces Series will be **Desert Fighter** - which is to be released during October/November. The game sounds hot, and not just because it depicts the struggle for North Africa during March 1941 to May 1943!

The heart of the campaign will be the "Battle of Supplies" that took place in North Africa at that time. Military history buffs will recall that this characteristic of war, Logistics, did much to disrupt the Italians and then Rommel's Afrika Corps. Dynamic campaigns will allow players to affect the course of the overall campaign based on their performance in the air. This will mix tactics with operational level considerations that will find the



enemy running low on fuel, or unable to keep their aircraft in the air for lack of spares. But only if you are good.

A full length campaign will be 200 missions! 30 aircraft, with approximately 18 flyable models including the Italian Macchi MC 202, the French Dewoitine D 520, and the Ju-87 Stuka where players will even be able to take the tail-gunner position. I believe that multi-positional play will be in a number of the aircraft.

On the Red Storm horizon watch out for **Force 21** in July/August. This should be a new gaming paradigm with sensor/shooter fighting in the less dense battlespace of the 21st century. Then in September the sequel to **Rainbow 6**, **Rogue Spear**. Weather effects like snow and rain, new weapons and equipment, new multiplayer modes, no more "bunching" of AI controlled teammates. Sounds like another quantum leap.

September should also see a new Jane's sim called **USAF**. This will place you in the cockpits of eight jets over the last 35 years. The F-105, F-4E, F-15C/E, F-117, F-16, A-10, and F-22. Go downtown from Hanoi to Baghdad in 62 missions.

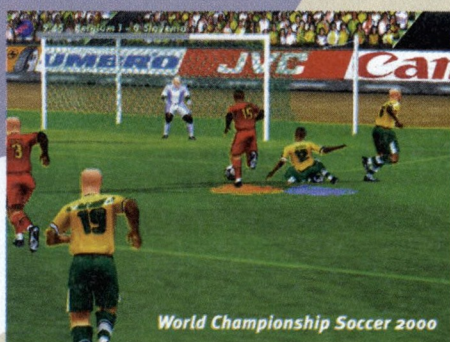
Some breaking news from SIMIS, their **Team Alligator Russian** helo sim coming out in October will give you control of up to 16 helicopters in real-time via individual and group commands. You'll also have the ability to interact with other air and friendly land forces using timed, triggered and interrupt orders. Competition here for **Apache Longbow** and **Gunship III**?

Sports

John Dewhurst

As a tribute to the outgoing Gareth Jones (formerly of this very column), PC PowerPlay presents a football (of the round variety) special.

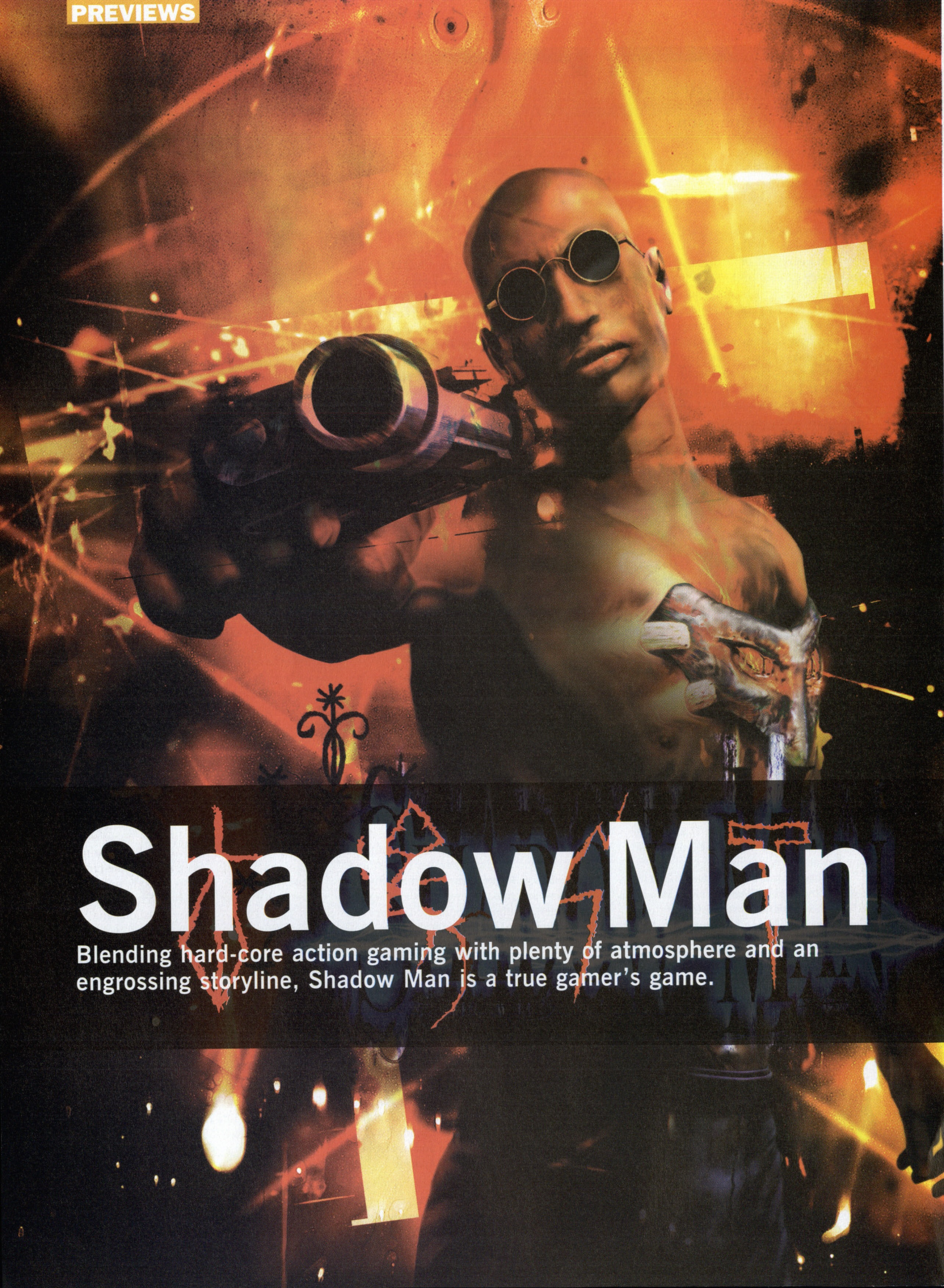
EA have an impressive track record when it comes to football titles. We all remember last year's **FIFA 99**, yes? EA's newest offering will be **FA Premier League Stars**. As the title suggests, this is a league-based game, so the emphasis is on the teams and players of the FA Premier League. Naturally, you'll have all the authentic line-ups and uniforms. A nice addition is that once you've won the cup, you can go on to play some of the finest club teams on the planet! No word on any multiplayer options as yet. Expect FA Premier League to be available in the second half of this year.



On more EA news, apparently they are going to build a multi-million dollar studio on our fair shore, which will be the headquarters for some EA Sports games. This is part of their push for more emphasis on regional gaming. Recent letters to PowerPlay have complained about Rugby League gaming - rest assured, all of our local games will benefit from this move.

Microsoft is looking to enter the big league (soccer-wise) with **World Championship Soccer 2000**. Since Americans haven't the first idea about football, it's a match that UK developer Rage Software is involved. This is an international affair with all the usual World Cup teams and the range of play options we've come to know and love. Microsoft is boasting a one-touch control system that responds to game situations and there will apparently be great detail in commentary as well as a killer AI, designed using the FA coaching manuals. Also, it promises 8 players over a LAN! If they can pull it off, this could be very interesting...

There's a demo out for Sierra Sport's **NASCAR Online Racing** series. With up to 22 drivers in a single multiplayer race, this is one to keep an eye on if you live for playing against others. In other miscellaneous news; boxing fans, you'll have to wait a little longer for **Prince Naseem Boxing**. Codemasters have confirmed this title has slipped to late 1999 - I just hope we see it before Christmas.



Shadow Man

Blending hard-core action gaming with plenty of atmosphere and an engrossing storyline, Shadow Man is a true gamer's game.

Category Action/Adventure
Players 1-TBA
Publisher Iguana
Available 3rd Qtr. '99

"Shadowborn at the confluence of worlds to move between.

Deadside partly living - the Asylum of the Heart - where the darkness of manifest at the edges of reason.

What sleep is here?

What dreams there are in the unctuous coilings of the snakes mortal shuffling.

Gun in hand.

Hand the arcing deathblow at the End of All Things.

The horror.

The horror..."

-On *Shadowman*, source unknown.

Ohh.. nice! Whatever the hell that's supposed to mean. While some of us will sit and scratch our heads at that passage, the rest of us will realise that obscure prose doth equal bucket loads of promise, and investigate further.

Intriguing action

Investigation and questioning is a common theme throughout the game, however any thoughts of Shadow Man as a traditional "point and click" adventure game should be promptly expelled. Shadow Man is as an action game, displayed in the third person, with a healthy dose of adventure carefully added to the mixture. And by crikey, in between fighting off hordes of terrifying monsters and escaping near death, the questions keep on coming. Who the heck is this guy? What's Deadside? How do I defeat that human monster? Why am I in this wretched place? How do I get out?

Voodoo adventure

Shadow Man deals with some fairly heady material. You play the role of Mike Leroi, an English literature graduate turned hired assassin (natural career progression), who moonlights at will as Shadow Man - comic book-style hero with a penchant for voodoo magic and all things mystical. Past perpetrators of pure evil (a gruesome collection of mass murderers and serial killers, infamous for their heinous crimes) are stirring and threaten the balance of Deadside - a place where the dead, pardon

the pun, make a living. You are called to stop them. The trick is that you can only venture through Deadside as Shadow Man, which happens to suit you fine considering the voodoo magic and power at his disposal. As the game unfolds, your role in the proceedings is slowly revealed. SM has a killer hook, and even looking at an incomplete version of the game, is hard to turn away from.

Wipe that drool...

The visuals of Shadow Man instantly leap out and suck you in. Using 3D acceleration, the environments of SM are fantastically detailed, and more importantly, beautifully designed. The folks at Iguana must have a fetish for large spaces as SM is full of them. And it's completely understood when you realise that SM hardly uses any fog techniques to keep game performance optimal. For example, close to The Asylum (an important game location), you come across a huge tower-like structure. Look up, and you can see all the way up to the top of the building, and still see the detail. Running into huge areas and seeing massive buildings such as

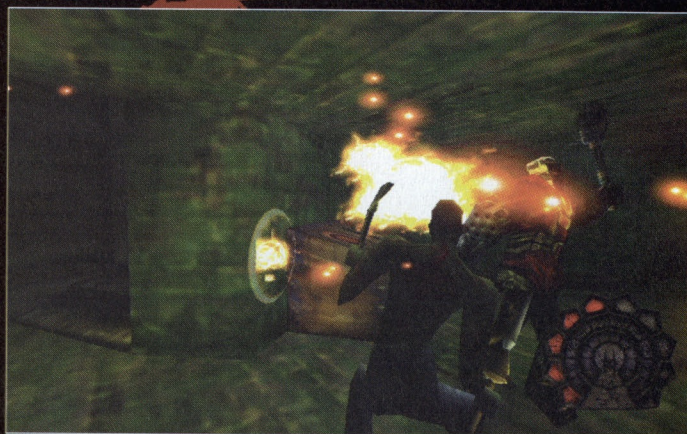
these throughout the game really is absolutely stunning. It also adds to the scope of the adventure, adding an almost real sense of scale.

Bloody good gameplay

The end result of all this detail is that Shadow Man is an absolute joy to play. There's a near perfect balance of character evolution, plot development, intrigue and action. It has a flow and sequence about it that most other action games can only dream of. And partly thanks to the exceptional graphics, it's got plenty of atmosphere too.

Of Light and Dark

Shadow Man thrusts you in the world where light is dark and dark is light again, and is for those gamers that want to go on a journey, rather than through the motions.



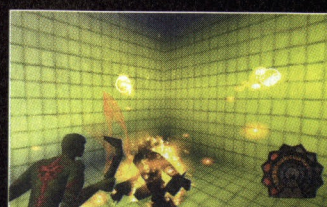
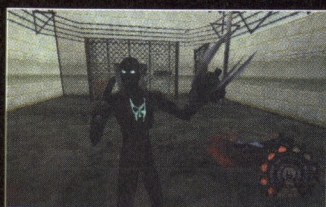
An Interview with Guy Miller

Guy Miller is the Creative Director of Iguana UK's Shadow Man. We caught up with him just after the game's press launch, which saw him put on a stunning performance as the game's mean-lookin' star. On top of dodging massive flamethrowers, flailing lit torches around, and speaking through a pair of sewn-together lips, the man seemed quite comfortable in the

temporary role of Shadow Man ambassador.

Nice get up by the way. You were utterly convincing as "Shadow Man" at the launch. Was it more a case of people needing to twist your arm to do the gig or was it a labour of love for you? Do you dress up as creepy looking gaming protagonists often?

Nobody needed to twist my arm, but I asked them to do it anyway, because I like that sort of thing. A labour of love? More



Demons and Serial Killers and Murderers, oh my! Shadow Man is set in a thoroughly unpleasant and very bleak land. Cool!

hatred than love; I'm a proponent of the Stanislavski 'method'. As for dressing up - at the weekends I'm called 'Lara'.

You have the title of Creative Director on Shadow Man. What exactly does this entail?

I'm the guy who says, 'Make that sky more green - the blood's too red, make it blacker - it looks more black by moonlight etc.' - oh, sorry, that's the producer's role. Creative Director, in my interpretation of the job, means that you direct the development team's creative potential - trying to squeeze the creativity out of them by pushing them just that little bit further than they would normally go, by sending them mad, basically. Which is what I've done on Shadow Man. Sent everyone mad. Especially Simon Phipps, Shadow Man's Senior Designer and my partner in the lust crime that is Shadow Man.

You've worked at RARE - a company with an impressive showing in its software. What did you get from working at RARE?

I got five years from Rare. They employ some very creative people. We have just employed one of these people. He is very talented. He worked on Goldeneye and Banjo Kazooie. And now we have him. Now he is One of Us. Now he will be working on Shadow Man... Bwahahaa!!

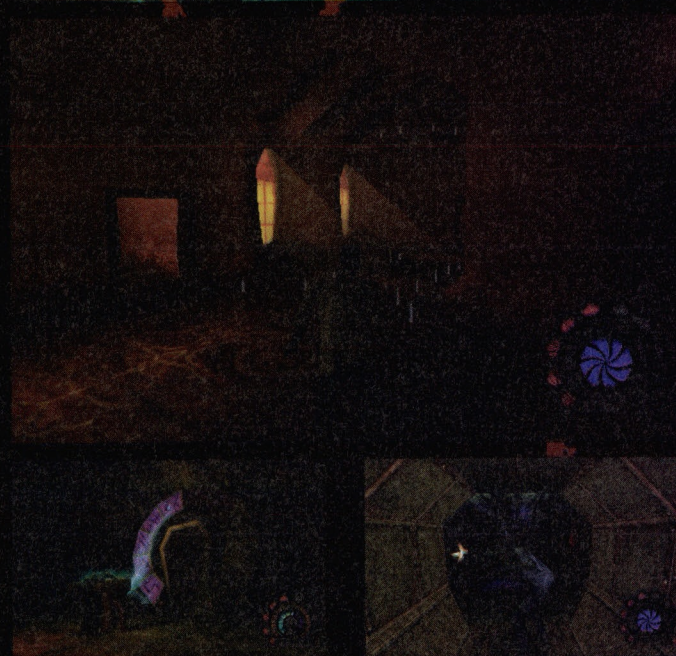
Why have you decided to use a third-person perspective - keeping in mind the success in the first person genre these days (with Quake, Unreal and Half Life, for example), and the apparent misgivings associated with titles using the 3rd person perspective (Tomb Raider, etc)?

There's a story behind this choice of perspective - when Simon Phipps and I were at Core we felt that Tomb Raider, due to developmental time constraints, couldn't take the third-

person concept to the max - I never really thought that Tomb Raider was as good as it should've been, as it was meant to be. So after leaving Core, Simes and I decided to take the third-person concept as far as it would go with Shadow Man. Shadow Man really is going to be the benchmark by which all other third-person games are judged - and that includes all future ad nauseam incarnations of Tomb Raider.

What benefits do you think using this perspective has had on the gameplay? Why not go with an existing game engine (like Heretic II's, for example)?

Shadow Man uses Iguana UK's proprietary VISTA engine, and the benefits of this are monstrous, because we actually designed the engine to cope with the mad excesses of our minds - VISTA does what we want it to do and therefore, we aren't constrained by the parameters set by an existing engine. It has allowed Shadow Man to do away with the need for fogging, so you can see into the distance and have the freedom to create simply ENORMOUS environments, for example. The 3rd person perspective also allows you to actually see



describe Shadow Man?

Shadow Man is 'mature' inasmuch as it has the word 'fuck' in it. At least, until the censorious moral minority rip their panties off and tell us we can't

use that word. And insofar as it is very, very unpleasant in parts - private parts, that is. Shadow Man was always intended as 'mature', for 'mature' gamers; the word 'mature' is open to interpretation though - I mean, are we talking solely about age here, or about the sophistication of a particular mindset? I've met twelve year olds that are more 'mature' than a middle-aged marketing man. If I was to briefly describe Shadow Man I would say that it was a third-person perspective, horror action adventure with a rich storyline, unpleasant (private) parts, blood, death, mayhem, madness and more weapons of mass destruction than Saddam Hussein.

There's been that whole "sophistication of games" kick seen in the

industry of late. Did you aim for this with Shadow Man?

Yes, but I think it would be pretentious to harp on about the 'intellectually challenging material' we've incorporated - mostly as subtext - into the game. Suffice it to say, that Shadow Man is definitely a gamewith soul, even if we couldn't get James Brown into it.

Shadow Man deals with serial killers and pleasant-sounding locations like Deadside. Has working on Shadow Man had any peculiar effects on your personality?

Well, yes, it has actually. I now love the sight of blood in the moonlight - it glistens blackly in a most wondrous way. And the smell! Ah, yes, the smell... the cachet.

If you could say one thing to a madman bearing down on you with a clearly dangerous weapon (who is, incidentally, hell bent on using it on you), what would it be?

Welcome...

Thanks for your time, Guy.
Thank you.



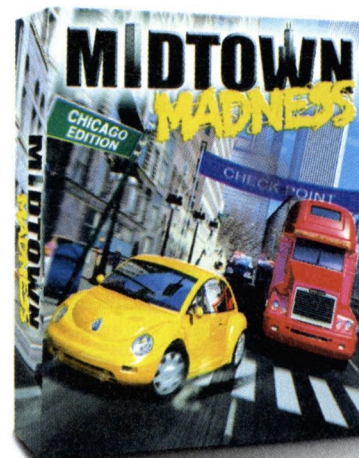
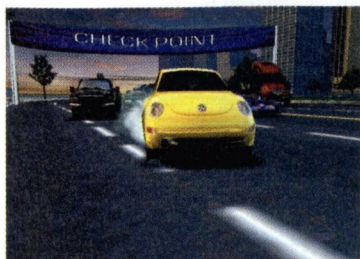
your character doing stuff - it's harder to implement and get right than a first-person game, but far more satisfying and ultimately more enjoyable when you finally get it right, like we've done with Shadow Man.

Shadow Man has been bandied about by many people as being a mature game. How so? And how would you



0-100 (off a skyscraper)? Yes.

Racers, start your mayhem. Grab hold of one of 10 wild vehicles and race through the windy streets of Chicago, where you'll have to deal with tough opponents, alleyways, drawbridges, newspaper racks, tunnels, and the police. Throw in five race modes and over 50 city landmarks, and there are plenty of sights to see. Just don't drive like a tourist.



See more action at

www.microsoft.com/games/midtown



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Microsoft

Re-Volt

They're small, nippy and whine a lot, and spend a great deal of time being run into the dirt. No, we're not talking about infants, but an RC racing game instead. And boy is it a lot of fun too.

Not too long after the physics engine had been added to the Re-Volt game code, the development team came across a wee bit of a problem. One of the initial design goals was to create a painstakingly accurate physics model. With the help of a PhD in physics (one of the team's lead programmers kept himself very busy before working on Re-Volt), they had managed to create one that was stunningly realistic. The problem however, as they surprisingly discovered, was that it was a bit too realistic. Combined with intricately designed courses, varying track surfaces and of course sheer speed, the remote control (RC) cars proved to be quite difficult to control and were at the mercy of the surrounding environments. Sure, there was satisfaction knowing that this was how real remote control cars handled. It just wasn't very much fun.

Pure fun

Thus began the process of dumbing down the game code to ensure Re-Volt remained true to Probe's original vision. To be a blisteringly addictive and fun remote control (RC) racing romp. To give gamers the chance to race through a whole stack of environments they would've loved to as a kid, but were never allowed to. Say, through a history museum (over display cases, sometimes through dis-

plays themselves). Or through a supermarket at high speed, zipping around aisles and dodging downed merchandise. Perhaps even over the neighbours parked car (the one that needs a couple of lengthy scratches over it - the reasons, entirely personal of course). Or the deck of a cruise liner, where the excess of water and steady rocking motion of the surroundings really tests your racing abilities. So while the physics model has been pulled back somewhat, the fun factor definitely has not.

Got it all

Re-Volt draws from a whole history of racing games for inspiration.

Complete a certain gameplay mode, and you'll be rewarded with an extra track. Win a race and unlock further RC cars, each with different handling and control abilities. There are stacks of gameplay modes to keep you hooked.

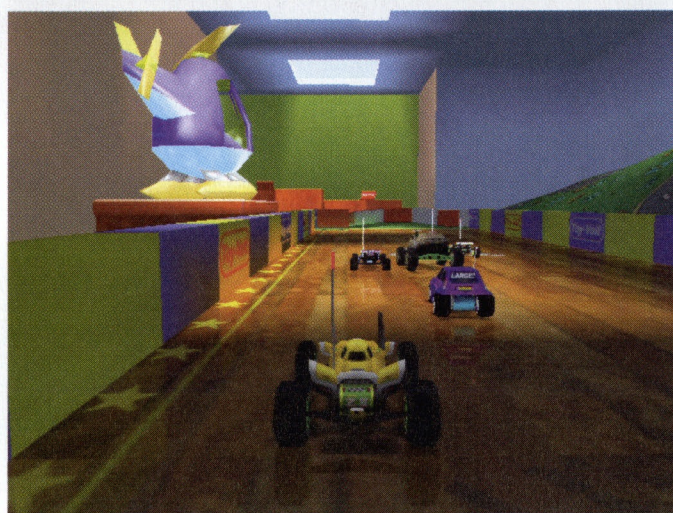
Usable (and enjoyable) weapons are

featured in the game, ranging from the bizarre to the spectacularly impressive. While the weapons enhance the gameplay somewhat, especially against

real-live opponents, Re-

Volt would have done just as well concentrating solely on the racing side of things. Of course, to

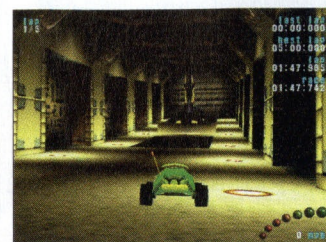
get the most enjoyment out of the game, you'll need to get yourself a decent gamepad.

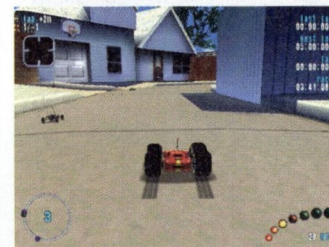
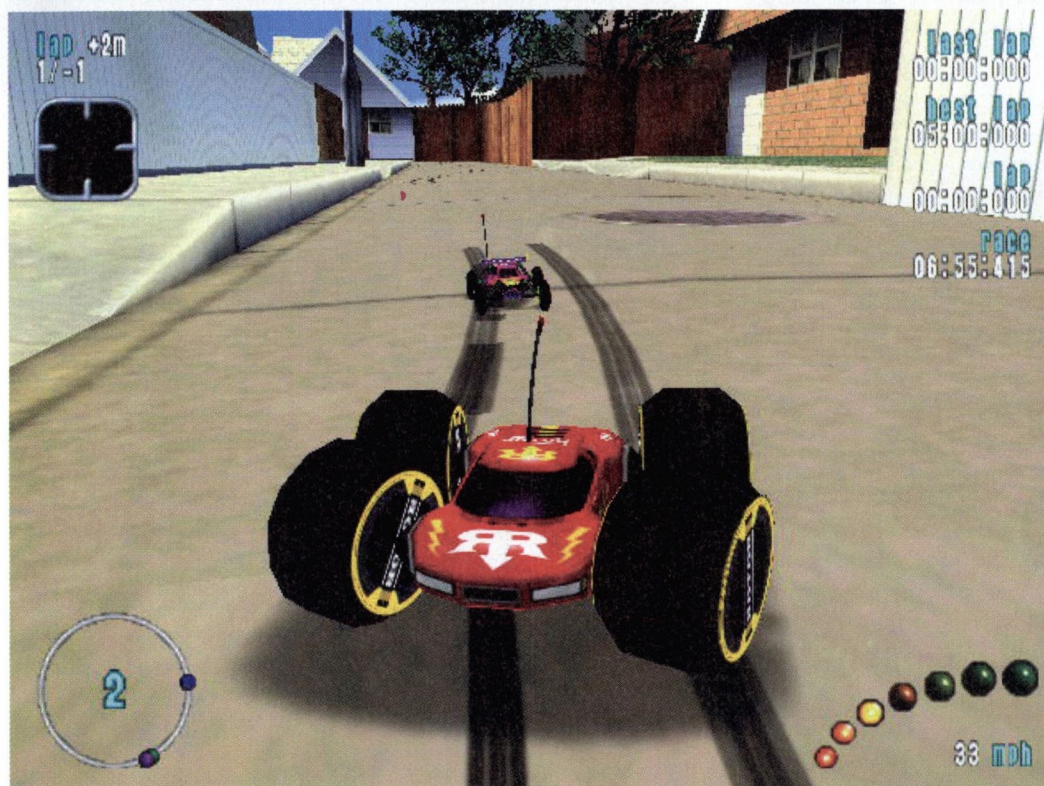
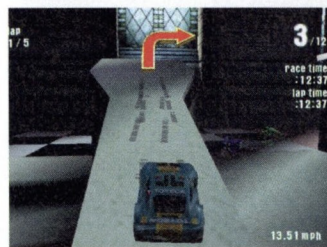
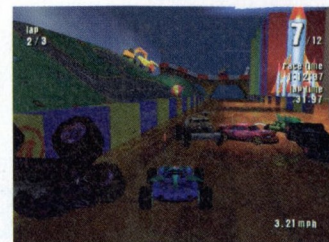


Ultra-real Physics

Hooning through your first track in Re-Volt is an interesting experience - rather than having one, or maybe two elements leap out and capture you (say, like the graphics or the sense of speed), it becomes clear that all

aspects of the game have been given priority treatment. The action is fast and furious. The weapons are nicely balanced and fun to play. The feel of the RC's are top notch, and the graphics are absolutely hot. The physics model keeps you on your toes.





changed at will. Last but not least, Probe will have full Internet support for Re-Volt. Players will be able to download tracks and skins from here (both official and unofficial), and be able to participate in official tournaments. Prizes will also be given for best lap times.

Re-Volt is a very promising title. Forgetting the options, it's an absolute joy to play. Still, it's hard to shake that nagging feeling that a game like this is better suited to a console system than a PC. If all goes to plan, Re-Volt could be the title that proves arcade racing action can be done on a PC, and done well.

Even the music, which was composed by a whole bunch of professional musicians under the direction of Steve Root (who happened to write the ultra-catchy theme song), is all class.

That said, the physics engine needs just a little further going into. Run one tyre through a an oil slick, and only that tyre will visually show the shiny black gunk on the tyre and leave marks on the track. Not only that, the oil will affect the cars traction, but only on the affected wheel! It's damn impressive to see in action.

You've also got sprinklers that stop working when you run over the hose, as well as our favourite - fully



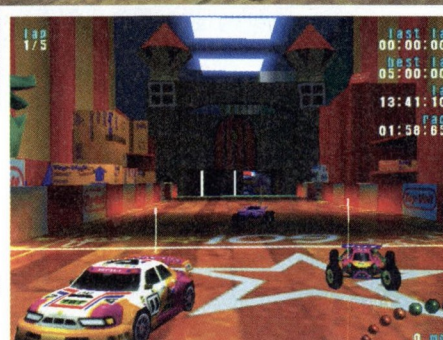
realised objects like basketballs serving as obstructions on The Hood (suburban) tracks. Run into it at full speed and you'll send it flying - with the ball's behaviour convincingly realistic. Probe were kind enough to point out to us the usefulness of bouncing balls in multiplayer games - in their ability to knock your competition right off course.

Skin Up

One of the strengths of this style of game is being able to play your friends, so Probe added a whole swag of options in this area. Firstly, there's a track editor



included with the game, so that you can design new courses and try them out against other opponents. Secondly, the RC car's "skins" can be



Star Trek

BIRTH OF THE FEDERATION

Category Strategy
Players 1-Multi
Publisher Microprose
Available June

From an outsider's perspective, space-bound, turn-based, empire building and resource management strategy games can look hugely daunting and always overwhelmingly complicated. The latest Star Trek title from Microprose is no different, it shouldn't surprise anyone to hear. Birth of the Federation is an infinitely hardcore game, defying the laws of the space-time continuum to warp the minds of even the most anal gamers. How fortuitous it is, then, that Trekkies are just about as anal as they get.

Going boldly where, admittedly, several other games have gone before, Birth centres around the recognisable facets of exploration, production, diplomacy, trade, and combat. Notably, there are five races from which to choose - the Cardassians, the United Federation (for those non-Trekkers, that's the humans), the Ferengi, the Klingons, and the Romulans - each with their own typical strengths and weaknesses. Besides these major races, there are numerous minor races also inhabiting the randomly-created star system within which each game takes place. The number of minor races chosen at the game setup screen has a significant



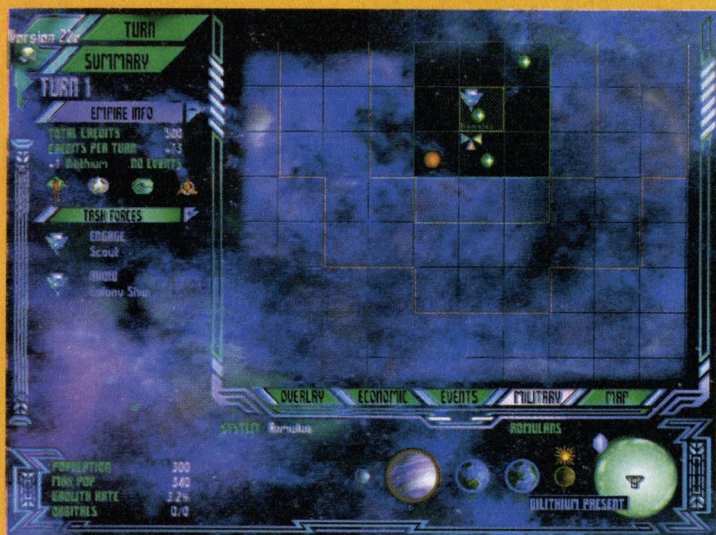
impact on the way the game will play. With many, trade, diplomacy and conquest come to the fore; yet with only a handful, exploration and colonisation become crucial factors in the expansion of your empire.

Research seems to be conducted in a more realistic manner than you might see in other strategy games. Six fields of research have been devised - bio tech, energy, computer, propulsion, construction and weapons - and work is carried out in each simultaneously. Allocation of resources to a certain field can be adjusted with a deft brush of a slider bar, thus concentrating, say, 25% of your efforts on computer technology while the other areas receive only 15% each. Individual projects still have to be selected on the tech tree, but the method of arriving at that research is more feasible, credible and, ultimately, more appealing than that provided elsewhere. Also, the tech tree itself appears well-stocked with gadgets and vehi-

cles all labelled by baffling terminology and statistics.

In visual terms, Birth appears as real-to-fiction, so to speak, as you would expect. All the computer panels you'll be negotiating look like they do on the Star Trek ships, though, as much as we tried, we couldn't get them to work simply by running our fingers over the monitor.

Of great interest to hardcore strategy gamers is the fact that the makers of Master Of Orion 2 have put their considerable talents to work here. Such excellent pedigree will mean widespread disappointment if Birth doesn't result in the truly great, epic space strategy we've been waiting for. Couple this with the depth of the Star Trek universe, not to mention its familiarity to a great many gamers, and this is one game that may well utilise curved space to build a wormhole to your heart. Prepare an away team for action any week now...



Not just another licence game, the makers of Masters of Orion 2 are behind this one



Outcast

Category Action/Adventure

Players 1

Publisher Infogrames

Available Spring

While we've always known that the French tend to make their games somewhat, ah... differently to the rest of the world - and at this point I could cite a legion of Gallic games that stretch the boundaries of sanity to a greater (Captain Blood, Little Big Adventure) or lesser (Atlantis, Riverworld) extent - it could barely be imagined that Infogrames would do something this unusual. Outcast is a 3D game without any kind of 3D hardware support. We'll give you a few moments to recover from the shock before we repeat ourselves.

Yes, it's true, Outcast has been designed to work solely as non-accelerated 3D game. Yet, thanks to the myriad wonders of the sadly under-used voxel 3D technology, it still manages to look unbelievably gorgeous. One distinct advantage voxels possess over the far more common polygons are their ability to inscribe heavily detailed and varied terrain, avoiding the tendency of polygon built worlds to appear square and uniform. In a game such as Outcast, where the action predominately takes place outdoors, this is extremely beneficial. Recently, Novalogic's Delta Force showed just how effective this rare practice can be when it is implemented well.

While the gloriously ragged landscapes look superb, they also offer a degree of visual depth unseen in polygon-engined 3D games. Where fogging effects or corridor-based design serve to disguise shortcomings in other games, Outcast presents you with a horizon that stretches for miles. Stand on top of a mountain and you'll be able to see the forests and towns below; run toward them and they'll fill your view gradually without a hint of pop-up or graphical trickery. It promises to be quite an incredible experience.

Operating within a similarly vast scope is the gameplay itself. Parallel universes are no longer the domain of whacked-out theo-

ry, but have been proven fact by one of the world's leading scientists. Regrettably, the first probe launched into a parallel universe is damaged and a team is assembled to investigate. When the search mission gets underway, however, Cutter Slade, the ludicrously named star of the game, finds himself in a strange world known as Adelpha, having lost contact with the rest of the investigative team and without a clue as to where the missing probe might be located.

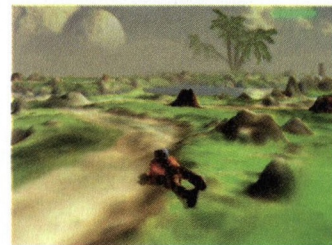
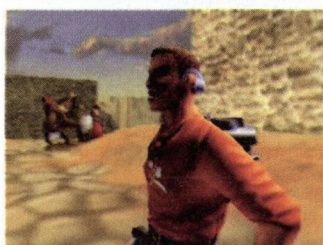
So, you gradually begin to explore Adelpha, interacting with the many inhabitants you encounter and try to put together the pieces of what could have happened. People you meet will apparently react to you in various ways depending upon the demeanour you adopt. Act friendly with one group and they might just help you out - although their enemies might not take too kindly to this.



Distracted whilst taking a leak, Cutter is forced to adopt the tricky cross-legged attack stance

Adventure and strategy elements come into play to transport Outcast from the tired realm of yet-another-3D-action-game. But, yes, there will also be plenty of guns, monsters and explosions, too. Which is nice.

Infogrames may well have something very special indeed here. If Outcast fulfils its undeniable potential it's going to make plenty of friends in a short space of time. In fact, it won't be an outcast at all.



Gabriel Knight

BLOOD OF THE SACRED, BLOOD OF THE DAMNED

Category Adventure
Players 1
Publisher Sierra
Available August

Always Sierra's best kept secret, this, the third of the Gabriel Knight series, could finally find the kind of success that has eluded it for so long. The present crisis at Sierra, that has

already witnessed the collapse of its other long-standing adventure franchises, may ironically provide Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned with the opportunity it needs. Gabriel Knight is ready to step out of the shadows of its more prominent siblings (King's Quest, Larry, et al) and assume centre stage for himself. Alongside Grace, of course.

However, that's not to say GK3 is without sufficient noteworthy features to demand attention all on its own. In fact, such is designer Jane Jensen's awesome ambition, that if she's successful this surely will be the game to revitalise the ailing adventure genre. Every now and then, each genre requires an injection of new life to either resuscitate interest (look what Baldur's Gate has done for RPGs) or expand its horizons (something Half-Life and Thief have achieved for first-person action gaming). With any luck, GK3 might even manage both.

So who is this Gabriel Knight, then? Well, he's the latest in a long line of Schattenjäger (or Shadowhunters) - a hereditary trait that has been passed on from father to son from the very beginning of his family's ancient German history. Although a struggling writer by profession, the two earlier adventures underlined Gabe's talent for investigating the occult. Not to mention nearly getting himself killed whilst doing so. GK3 sees Gabe and his assistant Grace travel to France to visit Rennes-le-Chateau at the invitation of a local prince. The mystery begins with the kidnapping of the prince's son, takes in the centuries old riddle of the Chateau itself, and all ends, rather bloodily it must be said, in vampires.

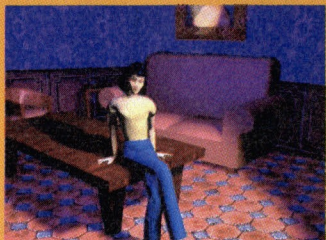
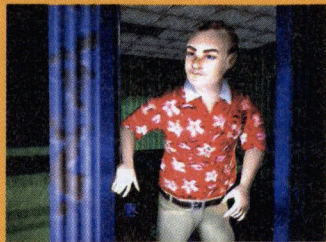
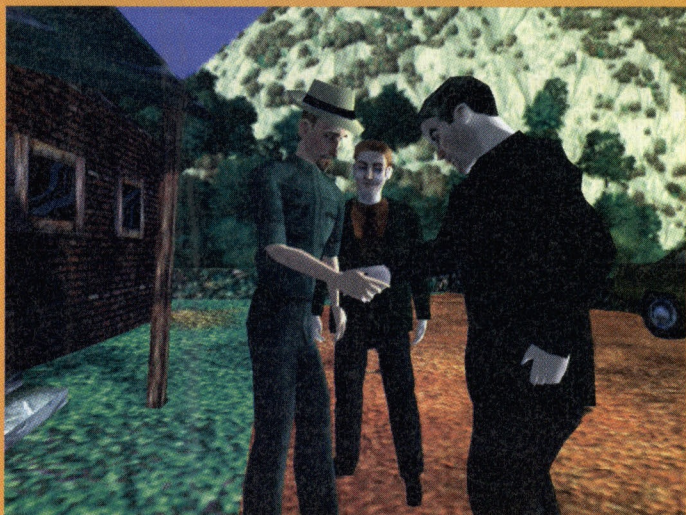
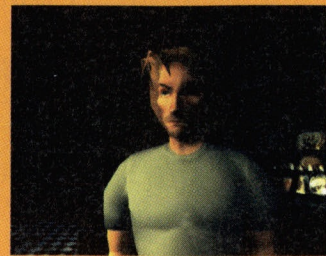
While a nicely mature tone to the story is expected (it's been a trademark of the earlier games in the series, after all), what is perhaps more surprising is the sophistication of the graphics engine. With the game world fully realised in 3D, there are several different views available to the player. Two of these - a first-person perspective and an

automatic third-person view - should be enough to depict the impressive locations in style. The third option enables a free-roaming camera that you can position wherever you wish, even in areas where Gabriel or Grace aren't present. It's the amazing possibility of this latter option that has us most excited.

Intriguingly, Jane Jensen has already indicated that the benefits of a 3D adventure extend beyond mere visual delight. Previously unexplored gameplay avenues have now been opened up, allowing for puzzles or situations that involve spatial elements and even time. This, in addition to the already strong character interaction of the series, should ensure GK3 distances itself even further from the traditional bounds of adventure gaming and deliver less of the much-maligned, illogical object-based gameplay of old.

Gabriel Knight 3 may well herald a new dawn in the adventure genre.

Tim Curry has signed up again to voice Gabriel, so we can only hope Mark Hamill reprises his role as Detective Moseley





Category Strategy
Players TBA
Publisher EA/Maxis
Available Late 99

It had to happen sooner or later, we suppose, such is the insatiable nature of the endless sequence of sim games from the house of Maxis. Grandfather of them all was Will Wright, designer of the original SimCity, now returns with the world's first domestic real-time strategy game. The Settlers meets This Life, anyone?

The Sims are your average,



everyday family. They have average, everyday (and voraciously capitalist) needs and desires. They just want to be happy. Making

The Sims



Voyeuristic? Now why would that be appealing?

sure they become and remain so will be your task. Split into three sections, The Sims has you first building a home for your little computer family, kitting them out with furniture, white goods and entertainment, then finally watching them get on with

their lives. As they go about their daily routine, your Sims develop emotions and ambitions to which you must respond. They fall in

love and get fired from their jobs, they have children and sometimes just get bored. All these situations need your input, whether it be fine-tuning the array of appliances in the kitchen or an improvement to the ergonomic design of the living room or sending them to their room without any dinner. Or something.

After several years in the wilderness trying to match the success of SimCity, with SC3000 Maxis appear to have got themselves back on track. Hopefully this will keep the family together.

Septerra Core

Category RPG
Players 1
Publisher Topware/Valkyrie
Available 3rd Qtr 99

What does Septerra Core mean? Well, put it this way. The game world has seven ecosystems - or world shells, as they're called - layering a planet that has at its heart a supercomputer. Hence, the planet is called Septerra and the Core is an essential life source for the inhabitants. Maya is a young street kid who scavenges for a

living amongst the debris dumped by the wasteful residents of Septerra's outer shell. As she's the star of the game, it's inevitable really that she quickly becomes caught up in some ancient prophecy as various evil sorts try to claim the Core's power for themselves.



A shameless clone of Final Fantasy VII. Tops, eh!

Heavily influenced by legendary Japanese RPGs, especially Final Fantasy VII, it must be noted, Septerra

Core tends toward a more traditional role-playing experience than the recent Silver. Your party will consist of several characters, each with their own potentially conflicting personalities - which sounds rather similar to Baldur's Gate in this regard. A complex and flexible spell system is promised, allowing players to create their own types, while the

phased combat is entirely tactical. The stylised background and character graphics achieve a superb mix of coolness and sexiness thanks to the sleek anime technique Valkyrie have adopted. And, for the lazy or optically-disadvantaged player, the full speech dialogue ought to be suitably agreeable.

At this stage it seems like Septerra Core has everything the modern RPG needs. Could be a classic.



Legend of the Blademasters

Category Action/RPG
Players 1-Multi
Publisher Ronin
Available August

While development on their Star Wars real-time strategy title - Force Commander - appears to be on hold indefi-



nately, Ronin Entertainment have been otherwise immersing themselves inside the role-playing world of wizards, dragons and orcs. The end result is the improbably titled Legend of the Blademasters.

Although allegedly featuring a significant portion of action gaming, Ronin have forged a distinctly RPG-ish story for the game. Young hero, Erik Valdemar, one day finds a mystical sword in the woods which changes his life forever. With now a destiny to fulfil, Erik finds himself embarking on a quest to learn the dark secret of the Guardians and the wars they have waged across his kingdom. Please, stop us if you've heard

In days of old when they had no fireworks, they got the local wizard to put on a show



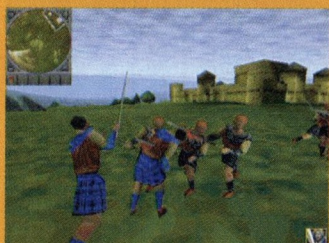
this one before. But, then, we believe hackneyed plots provide a considerable degree of an RPG's charm.

Much of Legend's proposed gameplay seems to be par for the course, though a couple of things stand out. In a novel twist to the usual single or multi-player game dilemma, Ronin have



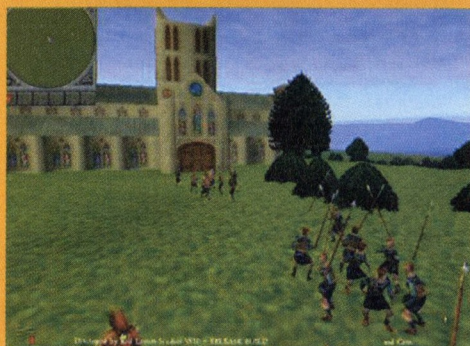
opted to design the main story to be experienced a strong single player game, but added several separate scenarios to be enjoyed as multi-player adventures. A good idea, too, if only because the length of the main quest in any typical RPG provides many headaches in trying to organise regular gaming sessions with friends. Additionally, in a situation somewhat unusual for third-person RPGs, the game will fully support 3D acceleration.

Ronin was formed by several ex-Lucasarts employees, so they should be well versed in how to design a playable game. Legend of the Blademasters is worthy of attention for that fact alone.



Category Strategy
Players 1-Multi
Publisher Eidos/Red Lemon
Available Late 99

First reaction - Myth in kilts. Second reaction - Myth in kilts. There can be no denying it, Braveheart bears all the hallmarks of a genre piece. Oddly it began life as Tartan Army, an attempt to capture the bloody thrill and barbaric nature of 13th century Celtic warfare.



Eidos possibly decided a picture of Mel Gibson on the box might sell a few more copies, so they went about acquiring the licence to the then recent film and, as a result, the Braveheart as we now know it was born.

Perhaps the Myth in kilts line is unkind, for Red Lemon are promising real-time strategy with a difference. Splitting the game into two sections - a 2D campaign map lets you handle the resource management side

with the greatest convenience, while the battles are resolved in sumptuous 3D polygonal splendour - will hopefully mean an end to the tired mission based structure of most RTS games.

Also, they've accurately mapped



the Scottish countryside - which is rather handy, really, as those miles and miles of bare hills shouldn't prove a stretch for any competent 3D engine. One of the promised features of the game is expected to be the vast scale of the battles that, if achieved, will set

Braveheart apart from the rest. An emphasis will no doubt be placed on co-ordinating the formation and tactics of your troops, as opposed to strategic use of terrain. But there will, of course, be plenty of opportunities for the historian to recreate famous battles.



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Prince of Persia 3D

Category Action/Adventure

Players 1

Publisher Red Orb

Available August

The history of the legendary Prince Of Persia series is covered in this month's Flashback, so we'll get straight on with the preview of the latest addition.



With the prince and princess reunited at the conclusion of *The Shadow and The Flame*, contriving a plot device to extend the series to a trilogy was always going to be somewhat difficult. But Red Orb have done it. Well, sort of. The Sultan from the original game may be out of the way, but his brother, the new king, Assan, has assumed the role of our prince's arch nemesis. Angry that the princess rebuked his son, the half-man/half-tiger, Rugnor's hand in marriage, Assan has devised a plan to lure them both to his mountain stronghold, thus imprisoning the prince and reclaiming his niece.

Yes, okay, so the background story may be trite and predictable, but - hey! - at least it's faithful to the spirit of the *Arabian Nights*. Besides, the action and the gameplay are sure to be spectacular.

According to the developers, exploration of the large and detailed 3D worlds they have created and, to a lesser extent, swashbuckling action will comprise most of that action and gameplay. The prince will explore various palaces, caverns, ruins, and fortresses throughout fifteen levels in search of his beloved wife. Some of the areas look stun-



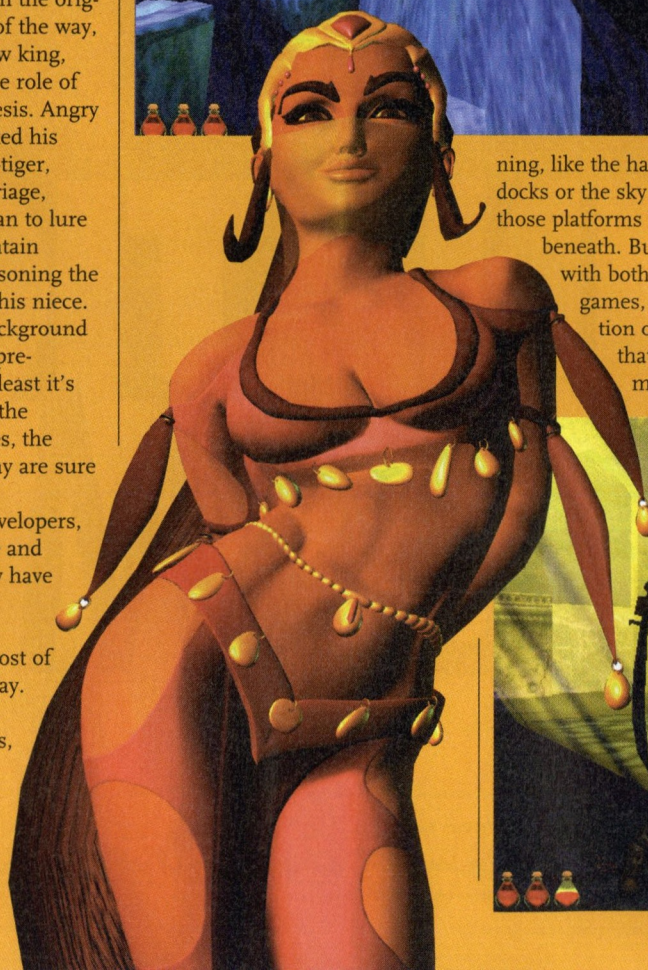
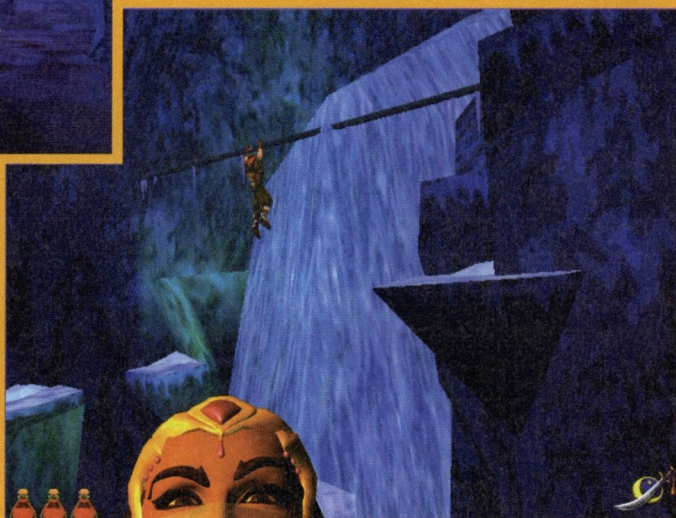
(left) As you can see, the melee combat leaves all other 3rd-person combat games for dead... literally

Swordfighting appears to offer so much more than the typical action/adventure hack 'n' slash with a planned emphasis on timing and precision. One of the clips we've seen features a prolonged sequence of to-ing and fro-ing between combatants, grappling interspersing the cut and thrust of the swordplay, then finishing with the prince slicing his opponent in half. In addition to melee weapons, the prince will also find much use for his recently-acquired bow and arrow as well as accumulating a number of as-yet-to-be-detailed mystical powers.

Some of the kinds of traps and items from the earlier games will make a reappearance, though there will obviously be a predominance of newer and more devious contraptions and situations. An early contender for our favourite, though, is the ankle blades - they first slice the unwary prince's feet then, as he falls forward, the subsequent rows hit his shins, thighs, groin, chest and neck, until he's nothing more than a few slabs of meat on the stone floor.

Original Prince of Persia creator, Jordan Mechner, is operating in an advisory capacity on this project. If his track record (*Karateka*, *POP*, *The Last Express*) is anything to go by, however, his contribution should be sufficient to make Prince of Persia 3D an absolute smash.

ning, like the hazy twilight of the docks or the sky city with all those platforms hanging beneath. But, of course, as with both previous POP games, it's the animation of the characters that will cause the most jaws to drop.



Might & Magic VII

FOR BLOOD AND HONOUR

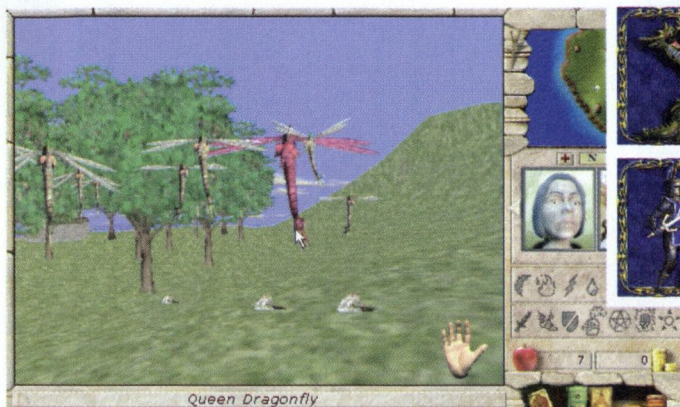


Category RPG
Players 1
Publisher 3DO/New World
Available June

Back in the 1980s, when the mammoth likes of Wizardry, The Bard's Tale, Ultima and Might & Magic raged war across the kingdom, developers would produce additions to each series on a regular basis by simply updating the previous game's engine. As role-playing games regain the popularity they once had, this is something you're going to see again with great frequency. Fallout 2 did it last year to good effect, while Lands Of Lore 3 has done it this month to rather less. Later this year, Black Isle's Planescape will use the Baldur's Gate engine and, just maybe, that game's sequel will appear as well. Of course, there's Might & Magic VII right here in front of us.

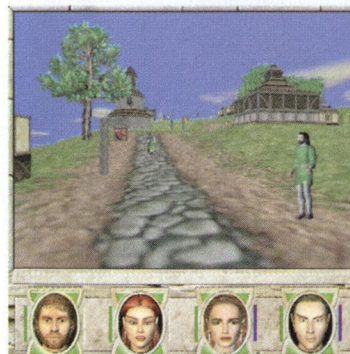
Old is new again

Pleasing at least one member of the PCPP staff, this month we were delivered a playable but

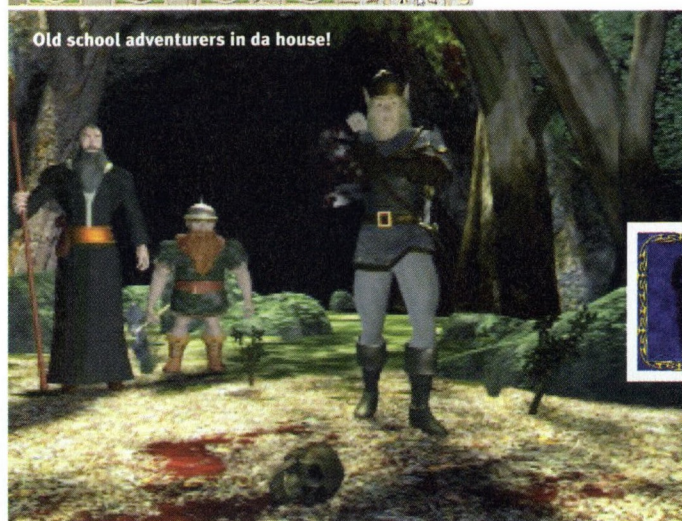


I am Lord Markham, the benefactor providing the castle that is the prize of the this contest.

Converse with Lord Markham



Old school adventurers in da house!



incomplete beta of New World's latest opus. Early experiences would suggest that little has changed since last year's sixth instalment, though as that

was deemed worthy of a Gold Award there seems only minor cause for complaint. You might anticipate that the inclusion of 3D hardware support ought to make a significant difference to the visual appeal, but sadly it doesn't. Using the same (albeit slightly improved, no doubt) 3D engine as MM6, For Blood And Honor utilises few of the capabilities of 3D acceleration. Overall, despite the texturing being noticeably smoother and the framerate marginally quicker, the game looks remarkably familiar.

Randy Dwarves

Elsewhere there have been some telling alterations. Where MM6 had only six character classes, MM7 offers a more varied choice of eight - knight, archer, monk, thief, sorcerer, cleric, druid and

ranger. Perhaps highlighting the weakness of "might" skilled classes in MM6, the knight remains the only character unable to use magic. Additionally, characters can also come from one of four races.

Humans are the typical all-rounder, while elves excel at magic, dwarves at strength and endurance, leaving speed as the domain of the goblin. Character creation and development is handled in a manner identical to the previous game, so you can min/max to your heart's content.

Improved combat

For those wanting a taste of the plot, we'll just say that the first hour or so of the game has you competing in a contest held by a local lord. Fulfil the treasure hunt style conditions of the

contest before your rivals and your party of four will become the proud owner of a castle. Unfortunately when you arrive at your new home, it's in a sham-bolic state of disrepair and overrun by rats and goblins. By this point, it will be apparent that New World have examined the failings of the MM6 combat system and implement-

ed one very clever improvement. The real-time option is still present, but you may now move whilst in the turn-based mode. This is a very, very good thing. Whether the excessive amount of combat has been toned down at all is a question that will hopefully be answered in a review next month.

A reliable RPG

Thus far, Might & Magic VII obviously looks set to please anyone who was a fan of its predecessors. New World have chosen the safe option of not messing with their original, winning formula and, consequently, hardcore role-players should be rewarded with an entertaining "old school" RPG.

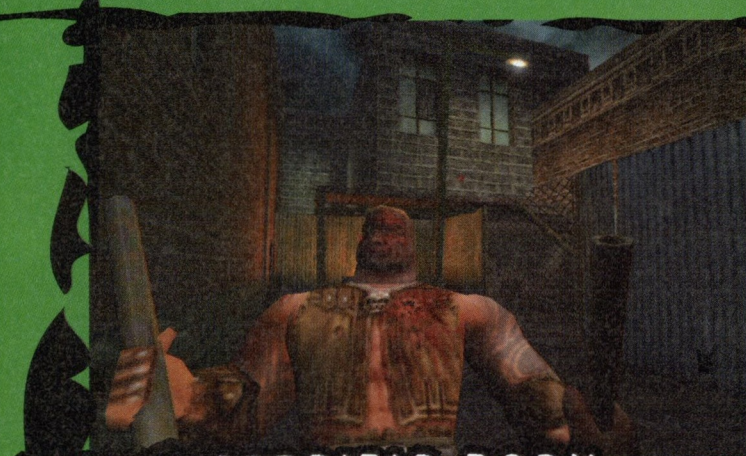


YOU'RE GONNA DIE.

YOU BUILD YOURSELF A REP WITH KILLINGS AND STREET KNOWLEDGE.
BUT THE HIGHER UP YOU GET, THE MORE THUGS WANT YOU DEAD.

WHO DO YOU WASTE? WHO DO YOU WOUND AND THEN SQUEEZE FOR INFO?
WHEN YOU ENLARGE YOUR TERRITORY, YOU INCREASE YOUR DANGER.

ARE YOU UP FOR THIS GAME?



TARGET SPECIFIC BODY PARTS AND ACTUALLY SEE THE DAMAGE DONE-INCLUDING EXIT WOUNDS.



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MULTIPLAYER GANG BANG DEATH
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Actual Gameplay Screens

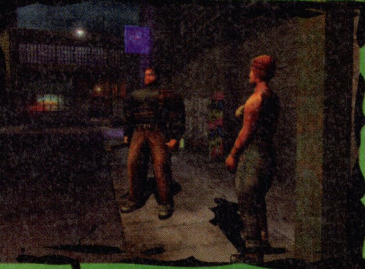


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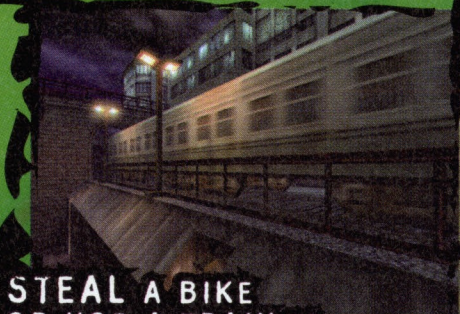
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FROM SMACK TO PACIFYING.**



**EVEN THE ODDS BY
RECRUITING THE GANG MEMBERS
YOU WANT ON YOUR SIDE.**



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GET AROUND TOWN.**

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THE SCORE

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GAME	SCORE	ISSUE	GAME	SCORE	ISSUE	GAME	SCORE	ISSUE
101st Airborne	71	#33	Birchright	79	#17	Descent: Freespace	93	#27
3D Mini Golf	80	#14	Black Dahlia	82	#24	Destiny	37	#10
3D Ultra Mini Golf Deluxe	60	#30	Blackstone Chronicles	75	#36	DethKarb	85	#31
3D Ultra Pinball	77	#21	Blade Runner	96	#19	Deus	72	#11
3rd Reich	82	#12	Blood	71	#14	Diablo	91	#11
688i Nuclear Sub	90	#16	Blood 2	72	#34	Die by the Sword	92	#25
7th Legion	53	#19	Blood and Magic	86	#9	DBTS: Limb From Limb	79	#32
A-10 Cuba!	65	#11	Blood Plasma	55	#21	Die Hard Trilogy	80	#13
Abe's Exoddus	86	#32	Blue Ice	77	#10	Dinotopia	55	#3
Abuse	25	#2	Brainstorm	43	#9	Discworld 2	88	#10
Acclaim's D	80	#1	Bridge Deluxe 2	85	#4	Dog Day	82	#13
Achtung Spittfire	80	#22	Broken Sword	89	#6	Dominion Storm	55	#31
Actua Golf 2	73	#23	Broken Sword 2	80	#19	Dragon Dice	71	#17
Actua Soccer	54	#16	Bud Tucker	70	#3	Dreams to Reality	71	#19
Actua Tennis	84	#32	Bug	53	#9	Duckman	73	#18
Adrenix	72	#29	Buggy	74	#33	Duke 3D Plutonium Pack	80	#16
AFL	62	#10	Burnout Drag Racing: PC Edition	70	#35	Duke Nukem 3D	90	#3
AFL 98	94	#19	C & C: Red Alert	97	#8	Dune 2000	87	#28
AFL 99	90	#34	C&C for Win 95	80	#14	Dungeon Keeper	85	#16
Afterlife	81	#5	C&C Sole Survivor	28	#23	Dungeon Keeper: Deeper	60	#22
Age of Empires	93	#17	Caesar III	88	#31	Earth 2140	86	#16
Age of Empires add-on pack	90	#33	Caesar's Palace	75	#21	Earthsiege 2	85	#2
Age of Sail	79	#13	Callahan's Crosstime Saloon	80	#14	East Front	75	#22
Agent Armstrong	68	#16	Capitalism	40	#2	Echelon	15	#31
AH-64 Flashpoint Korea	92	#11	Carmageddon	90	#15	Ecstatica 2	86	#12
AH-64D Longbow	86	#3	Carmageddon II	92	#33	Egypt 1156 BC	77	#26
Air Warrior II	73	#12	Cart: Precision Racing	84	#19	Elder Scrolls	78	#35
Air Warrior III	92	#22	Castrol Honda Superbikes	89	#26	Elk Moon Murder	65	#5
Al Unser Jr Arcade Racing	40	#3	Cave Wars	72	#12	Enemy Infestation	76	#30
Albion	70	#8	Championship Manager 2	78	#10	Enemy Nations	69	#17
Alien Earth	54	#27	Chaos Overlords	64	#3	Entrepreneur	81	#22
Alien Incident	86	#6	Chasm: The Rift	60	#19	Euro 96	85	#4
Alien Trilogy	51	#10	Chess Master 4000 Turbo	86	#3	European Air War	94	#31
Alien Virus	69	#5	Chess Wars	70	#15	Evidence	49	#20
Aliens vs. Predator	96	#36	Chronicles of the Sword	48	#3	Extractors	30	#5
Alpha Centauri	96	#36	City of Lost Children	74	#12	Extreme Assault	88	#17
American Civil War	53	#5	Civ 2 Fantastic Worlds	68	#21	Extreme Games	60	#1
Amok	79	#8	Civ 2: Multiplayer + classic	90	#28	Extreme Tactics	61	#27
Anastasia	20	#27	Civilization: Call To Power	96	#36	F-16	80	#17
Ancient Conquest	79	#35	Civil War	84	#8	F-22 Lightning 2	80	#8
Ancient Evil	72	#26	Civil War II: Generals	81	#22	F-22 Raptor	74	#22
Andretti Racing	77	#21	Civilization 2	90	#1	F/A-18 Hornet 3.0	78	#16
Apache Havoc	84	#34	Claw	62	#26	F1 Manager	75	#8
Apache Longbow Gold	92	#13	Close Combat	72	#5	F1 Racing Sim	79	#22
Arc of Time	75	#11	Close Combat 2	90	#18	F16: Aggressor	69	#32
Archimedean Dynasty	90	#8	Close Combat 3	88	#35	F22 ADF	87	#21
ARL Rugby League 96	88	#4	Cluedo	71	#34	F22 ADF: Rea Sea	85	#27
Armor Command	86	#25	Clyde's Revenge	69	#6	FA/18 E Carrier Strike Fighter	68	#30
Armoured Fist 2	82	#20	Colin McRae Rally	94	#30	Fable	46	#10
Army Men	85	#29	Comanche 3	80	#14	Falcon 4.0	98	#33
Ashghan	43	#36	Comanche Gold	85	#27	Fallen Haven	71	#13
Assassin 2015	55	#8	Combat Chess	70	#20	Fallout	89	#18
Assault Rigs	50	#1	Commandos	82	#28	Fallout 2	88	#32
Asteroids	74	#33	Complete Carriers at War	61	#2	Fantasy General	82	#2
ATF Gold	86	#13	Conquest of the New World	71	#2	Fatal Abyss	62	#33
Atlantis	73	#17	Constructor	84	#15	Fields of Fire	53	#29
Atmosphere	55	#2	Creatures	85	#8	FIFA 97	69	#10
Atomic Bomberman	72	#16	Creatures 2	86	#31	FIFA 98	95	#20
Australian Cricket Captain	86	#36	Crocket 97	87	#17	FIFA 99	92	#32
Azrael's Tear	80	#8	Croc	74	#22	FIFA Soccer Manager	71	#16
Babe Ruth Baseball	60	#17	Crusader: No Regret	95	#7	Fighter Pilot	71	#32
Back to Baghdad	75	#5	Curse of Monkey Island	92	#21	Fighter Squadron	85	#36
Bad Day on the Midway	70	#2	Cyber Judas	43	#5	Fighting Force	70	#23
Bad Mojo: the Roach Game	82	#2	Cyberball	6	#29	Final Conflict	20	#24
Baku Baku	89	#7	Cyberstorm	91	#3	Final Doom	82	#6
Baldur's Gate	87	#35	Cyberstorm 2: Corporate War	68	#28	Final Fantasy VII	90	#27
Balls Of Steel	89	#23	Cyberstrike 2	83	#34	Firefight	82	#5
Bass Masters Classic	76	#28	Daggerfall	83	#8	Flight Unlimited II	89	#22
Battle at Ardennes	86	#17	Dark Colony	60	#18	Flipout	73	#14
Battle Cruiser 3000AD	78	#12	Dark Earth	91	#19	Flying Corp	76	#11
Battleground 8: Waterloo	78	#22	Dark Reign	94	#14	Flying Corps Gold	74	#20
Battleground Antietam	83	#11	Dark Reign: Rise of Shadowhand	80	#25	Forbidden City	74	#32
Battleground Ardennes	67	#2	Dark Seed 2	80	#3	For in the Tale	58	#13
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Battleground Waterloo	67	#4	Davis Cup Tennis	17	#10	FPS: Skiing	63	#24
Battleship	71	#15	Dawn of Aces	72	#36	Fragile Allegiance	85	#10
Battlespire	54	#30	Daytona	60	#10	Freespace: Silent Threat	80	#32
Battlezone	90	#22	Daytona USA Deluxe	25	#19	Front Page Sports Golf	77	#18
Beast Wars	43	#26	Deadline	66	#5	Hunter Hunted	82	#7
Beasts and Bumpkins	92	#18	Deadlock	74	#6	G-Name	80	#15
Beat The House 2	76	#23	Deadlock 2	78	#23	G-Police	92	#18
Beavis and Butthead	68	#36	Death Rally	83	#11	Galapagos	77	#19
Bedlam	68	#8	Deathkeep	30	#4	Gangsters	85	#34
Betrayal at Antara	71	#16	Decathlon	20	#6	Genie Wars	72	#4
Beyond Time	50	#30	Deer Hunter 2	55	#32	Gene Wars	86	#8
Big Hurt Baseball	79	#5	Delta Forces	91	#33	Get Medieval	61	#30
Big Race Pinball	90	#33	Descent 2	90	#1	Gettysburg	80	#1
Big Red Racing	67	#2	Descent II Infinite Abyss	89	#16	Gex	80	#7
Bio Freaks	72	#28	Descent To Undermountain	31	#23	Gex 2: Enter the Gecko	87	#28
Birthright	79	#17	Descent	93	#27			
Black Dahlia	82	#24	Destiny	37	#10			
Blackstone Chronicles	75	#36	DethKarb	85	#31			
Blade Runner	96	#19	Deus	72	#11			
Blood	71	#14	Diablo	91	#11			
Blood 2	72	#34	Die by the Sword	92	#25			
Blood and Magic	86	#9	DBTS: Limb From Limb	79	#32			
Blood Plasma	55	#21	Die Hard Trilogy	80	#13			
Blue Ice	77	#10	Dinotopia	55	#3			
Brainstorm	43	#9	Discworld 2	88	#10			
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Chess Master 4000 Turbo	86	#3	European Air War	94	#31			
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Claw	62	#26	F1 Manager	75	#8			
Close Combat	72	#5	F1 Racing Sim	79	#22			
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Cluedo	71	#34	F22 ADF: Rea Sea	85	#27			
Clyde's Revenge	69	#6	FA/18 E Carrier Strike Fighter	68	#30			
Colin McRae Rally	94	#30	Fable	46	#10			
Comanche 3	80	#14	Falcon 4.0	98	#33			
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Creatures	85	#8	FIFA 97	69	#10			
Creatures 2	86	#31	FIFA 98	95	#20			
Crocket 97	87	#17	FIFA 99	92	#32			
Croc	74	#22	FIFA Soccer Manager	71	#16			
Crusader: No Regret	95	#7	Fighter Pilot	71	#32			
Curse of Monkey Island	92	#21	Fighter Squadron	85	#36			
Cyber Judas	43	#5	Fighting Force	70	#23			
Cyberball	6	#29	Final Conflict	20	#24			
Cyberstorm	91	#3	Final Doom	82	#6			
Cyberstorm 2: Corporate War	68	#28	Final Fantasy VII	90	#27			
Cyberstrike 2	83	#34	Firefight	82	#5			
Daggerfall	83	#8	Flight Unlimited II	89	#22			
Dark Colony	60	#18	Flipout	73	#14			
Dark Earth	91	#19	Flying Corp	76	#11			
Dark Reign	94	#14	Flying Corps Gold	74	#20			
Dark Reign: Rise of Shadowhand	80	#25	Forbidden City	74	#32			
Dark Seed 2	80	#3	For in the Tale	58	#13			
Dark Side of the Moon	47	#36	Formula 1 3Dfx	77	#12			
Dark Vengeance	30	#36	Formula Karts	84	#19			
Darklight Conflict	89	#14	Forsaken	93	#25			
Davis Cup Tennis	17	#10	FPS: Skiing	63	#24			
Dawn of Aces	72	#36	Fragile Allegiance	85	#10			
Daytona	60	#10	Freespace: Silent Threat	80	#32			
Daytona USA Deluxe	25	#19	Front Page Sports Golf	77	#18			
Deadline	66	#5	Hunter Hunted	82	#7			
Deadlock	74	#6	G-Name	80	#15			
Deadlock 2	78	#23	G-Police	92	#18			
Death Rally	83	#11	Galapagos	77	#19			
Deathkeep	30	#4	Gangsters	85	#34			
Decathlon	20	#6	Genie Wars	72	#4			
Deer Hunter 2	55	#32	Gene Wars	86	#8			
Delta Forces	91	#33	Get Medieval	61	#30			
Descent 2	90	#1	Gettysburg	80	#1			
Descent II Infinite Abyss	89	#16	Gex	80	#7			
Descent To Undermountain	31	#23	Gex 2: Enter the Gecko	87	#28			
Descent	93	#27						
Destiny	37	#10						
DethKarb	85	#31						
Deus	72	#11						
Diablo	91	#11						

Gold Award - Games scoring 90-95% **Platinum Award - Games scoring 95-100%**

Urban Assault	81	#29		
USCF Chess	71	#23	Witchhaven 2	59 #4
V2000	45	#33	Wizardry	80 #9
Vangers	53	#29	Wizardry Gold	52 #4
Vegas Games	60	#14	Wolfenstein 3D	100 #25
Versailles	81	#11	Wooden Ships and Iron Men	71 #13
Viper Racing	80	#34	World Cup 98	84 #26
Virtua Cop	82	#10	World League Basketball	58 #26
Virtua Cop 2	78	#21	World League Soccer 98	85 #26
Virtual Pool 2	93	#19	World Rally Fever	68 #4
Virtual Snooker	80	#2	Worms 2	90 #19
Voodoo Kid	79	#18	Worms Armageddon	83 #36
Voyeur 2	20	#5	Worms Reinforcements	84 #5
VR Sports Baseball 97	91	#21	Wreckin' Crew	27 #29
W. Gretzky & NHLPA Allstars	20	#1	Wrestlemania	80 #5
Wages of War	65	#11	WWII Fighters	92 #33
War College Simulator 3	57	#6	X-Wing Alliance	94 #36
War Games	68	#29	X-Wing vs. TIE: Balance Power	83 #22
War Gods	70	#18	X-Card	61 #20
War of the Worlds	70	#34	X-COM: Apocalypse	93 #15
Warbirds 2	81	#36	X-COM: Interceptor	77 #27
Warbreeds	54	#26	X-Wing vs. TIE Fighter	93 #13
Warcraft 2: 70 Levels	63	#12	Yenocracy	68 #28
Warcraft 2: Dark Portal	60	#3	XS	71 #9
Wargasm	80	#32	Yoda Stories	74 #12
Warhammer 40K	88	#22	You Don't Know Jack XL	94 #2
Warhammer: Dark Omen	88	#25	You Don't Know Jack: Movies	88 #14
Warlords 3: Darklords	89	#29	Z	72 #6
Warlords III	89	#16	Zombie Wars	69 #13
Warwind II	54	#22	Zork Grand Inquisitor	96 #20
Water World	56	#19	Zork Nemesis	86 #2
WCW Nitro	52	#35		
Wetrix	40	#31		
Wing Commander Kilrathi	82	#9		
Wing Commander Prophecy	90	#22		
Wipeout 1997	75	#14		



AN APOLOGY

HIDDEN & DANGEROUS

Directsoft Pty Ltd wishes to apologise to all PC Gamers who have yet to hear, of what is sure to be, one of this years "Games of the Year".

We feel that the enormous task of ensuring all PC Gamers hear about this great product is greater than even **our** marketing team can handle. As such, we are truly upset that some PC Gamers will miss out on what can only be described as a truly remarkable gaming experience.

"Hidden & Dangerous" takes place during World War II. The story begins in 1943 and, provided that you choose the correct course of action, you can get to the end of the war in 1945. The player's task is to lead a small group of Allied soldiers (up to 4 people) who carry out difficult missions deep in enemy territory. Missions take place in six different localities.

"Hidden & Dangerous" is an action/real-time strategic game, containing a combination of non-traditional features. Plentiful new features and stunning true 3D graphics give the game original form and dynamic pace. The story is imaginative and full of reversals, and forces the player to think ahead at all times.

"Hidden & Dangerous" is simply not a game about blindly bursting into a room and shooting at anything that moves, it is about so much more. We are convinced that "Hidden & Dangerous" will make it to the top of this year's all time greats in the action/real-time strategy games category.

Once again our sincere apologies to all those who miss out.

Bruce Wilson
Managing Director
Directsoft Pty Ltd
A Take 2 Interactive Company

Directsoft Pty Ltd
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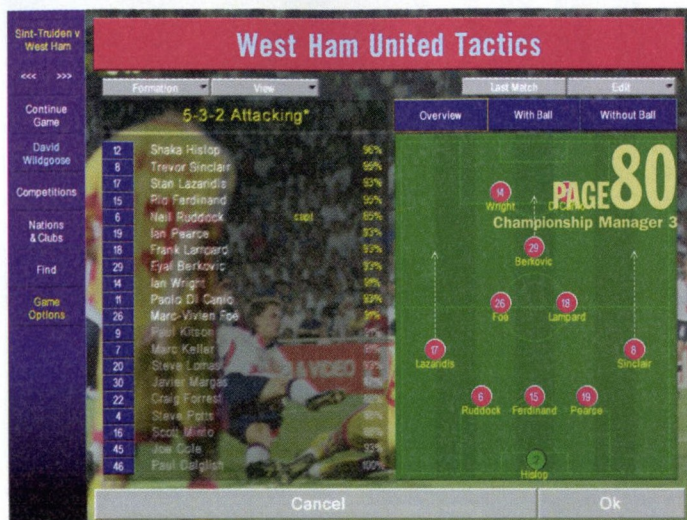
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REVIEWS



Cricket, Mechs, Cars & Dead Guys

Play some dead guy wandering the gruesome corridors of hell in Requiem, we are, it's tops. Settle future religious and territorial disputes with Machines - they've got big eyes so, as killing machines go, they are on the soft and friendly side of the fence. Cricket World Cup 99, it's a cricket game, a good one, very very good, in fact, give the meat of your bat the full whack with this beauty.

Drive upside-down, you've always wanted to, admit it, it's natural. Rollcage is the vehicle for you if you're into upside-down vehicles. Descent 3 is like Descent 1 and Descent 2, but better, which

is good. The quest for a playable 3D RTS continues, Warzone is the latest valiant effort at this so far pointless genre. CM3, soccer schmoccer... Play Army Men 2, get inspired and shut down the bloody machine and go find your original toy soldiers. Laugh at the law with GTA London, save the bloody kingdom one more time with Lands of Lore 3.

And a bunch of other games, some rip, some sink, but that's what Reviews are for, so you know which is which, go read them, thanks.

Ben Mansill
Editor

Requiem	62
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Rollcage	74
Descent 3	76
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Battle of Britain.....	94
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Jimmy White Snooker	96
Deep Sea Fishing.....	98
NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series Racing	99
Sin: Wages of Sin	100



THE PC POWERPLAY SCORING SYSTEM

95%+	PLATINUM The Best. Virtually faultless, reserved for games which cause loss of sleep from thinking of nothing else.
90-94%	GOLD A classic. Either an unquestionable example of superiority within its genre, or a ground breaking game that'll be setting trends.
80-90%	SILVER A strong, eminently playable game. Hard to fault and likely to still be on the hard drive in 6 month's time.
60-80%	BRONZE Competent and generally enjoyable. Flaws or mediocrity hold these games back from higher ratings.
40-60%	IRON Average and ordinary. Not bad, not good. Ideal gift.
0-40%	LEAD Bad, really bad. Boring, shamelessly unoriginal, cheap and horrible.

Requiem

AVENGING ANGEL

DEMON PETS GUNNED DOWN BY UZI-TOTING WINGED DUDE - "He seemed really annoyed about something or other", says eyewitness.

Alright, the Armageddon (that's the final battle between good and evil, kids) that will destroy the Earth is looming, and our story basically revolves around the bitchy office politics that surrounds such a tumultuous conflict. Beelzebub is conducting a mass-recruitment drive in the last haven of human decency, the progressive future city of New Jericho. He's targeted this place because the people there have a real chance at redeeming themselves in an organised fashion: a kind of "help thy neighbour get to



Heaven" scheme. The horny red guy, Lucifer, is not impressed with this idea.

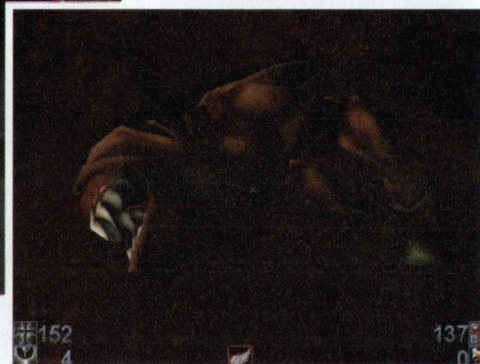
Flesh-flaying decadence

Demons are extracting people in their thousands out of the positive environment and wiring their minds to the thrashy radio station of damnation. A resistance movement arises from the ranks of the virtuous, lead by a bold young warrior type, who is unfortunately blown to bits. Without his shining example the

remainder are afraid to take action. Add to this the sudden headhunting mission lead by the enterprising Satan that has tempted a large number of God's Angels (not the leather-jacket ones) to defect from heaven, choosing to join the lucrative decadence and flesh-flaying activities Hades has to offer. This leaves a fairly thin staff in the big Upstairs. Consisting mainly of you, the angry Angel Malachi (mal-ah-ky) and the big old guy with the white beard. You determine

that you must take on a mortal form and take the dead hero's place in leading the humans to their own salvation, because the bad guys are definitely not playing fair.

This involves giving up your wings, halo, immortality and bullet-proof skin, going into New Jericho and shooting the entire possessed army single-handed, with weapons you gradually accumulate on the way. This is something akin to Clint Eastwood strolling into down-



In which the Archangel Eddie lays down his wings for some durable combat armour.

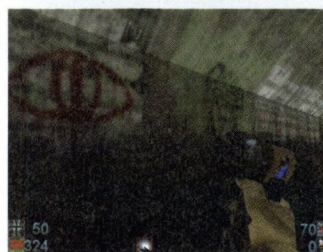




town San Pedro with a pair of secateurs and a roll of nylon hose. Sound familiar?

Pillar-of-Salt

Luckily you're not completely unprepared: as you progress you are given back your biblical angel powers one at a time. Popular hits like the Lightning Strike and Pillar-of-Salt trick are here, as well as the family favourites Resurrection and of course Exorcism. You can take control of resurrected or exorcised enemies, who will fight on your side.



This biblical thematic has been very well carried off, complete with a totally mindblowing Hell experience, throaty reverberating spirit voices and shimmering apparitions that radiate pure evil. It's atmospheric from go to whoa.

Requiem plays like a pretty standard action game. You use a variety of guns in a variety of locations, against a variety of enemies but in a perfectly crisp, immaculate style. It's a lot like the pedestrian sections of Shogun (that's a totally good thing), but it looks a lot better.

It's, like, real

The first thing you'll notice is the amazing attention to detail. Requiem looks fantastic, mostly thanks to an astounding artistic effort. Every time you turn a corner, there's more to "wow" about. The textures in particular, are intense. Flat walls become captivating, with cool posters, graffiti, and immaculate religious murals at every turn. With little or no repetition. That is really refreshing, and the characters have realtime rendered, shaped shadows cast at their feet, which completes the 3D suspension of belief. It's also an unexpected aid to combat awareness, whereby an opponent can lose the element of surprise when entering the field of fire, by their shadow giving them away. It really consolidates the visuals beyond what you expect to see. It's a very welcome, solid addition to the simulation.

And the characters look amazing. Curved forms, and exquisite textures that will make you blink at the sheer quality, and their

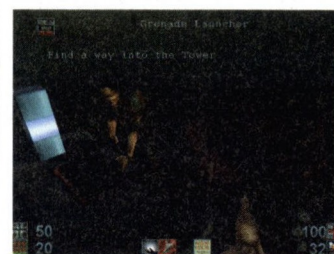


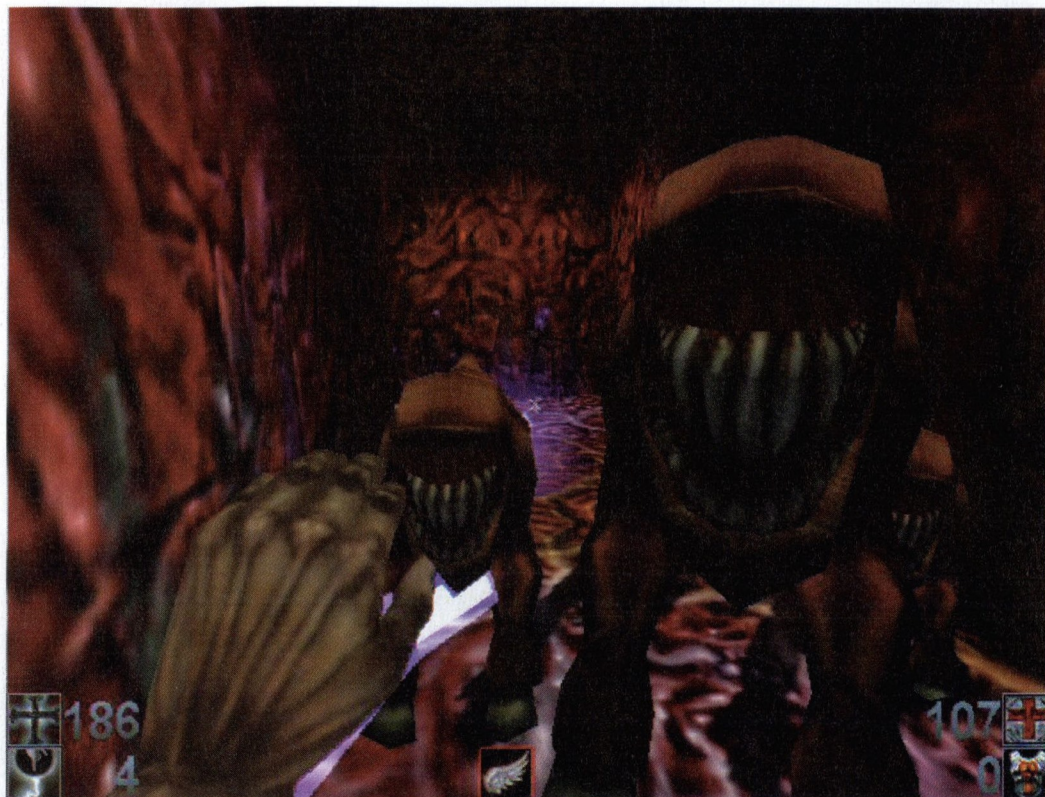
Hang on! We thought heaven was all white teeth, games of tennis and piped muzak. No one told us there were guns!

slick animation and behaviour. Bits get blown off in combat, directly related to where you hit them. You can even kill instantly with head-shots, with any gun.

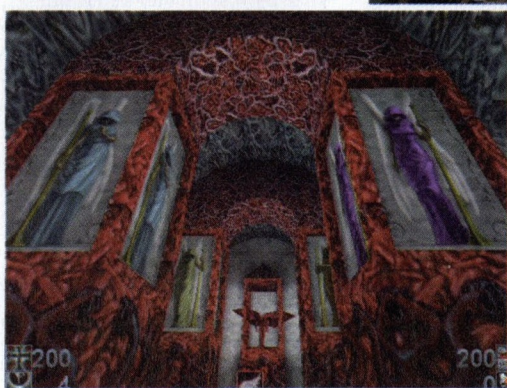
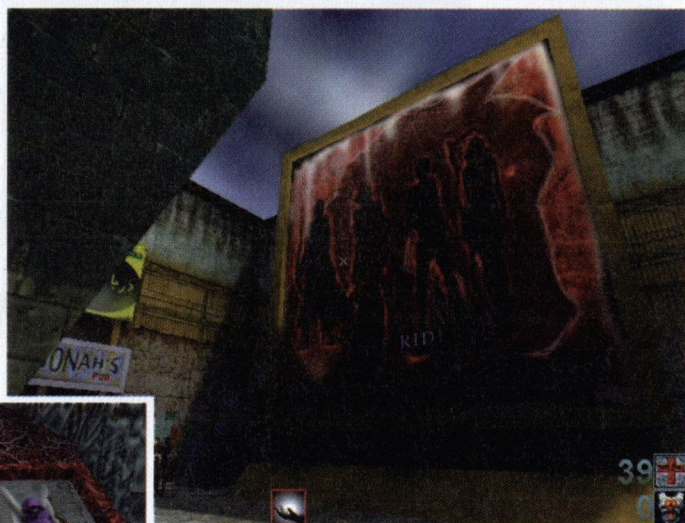
Fast and funky

And it's no cheesy picnic. This game plays smooth, fast, and deadly, while the weapons are





"Look, Demonspawn, when I said you would eat angelic lightning death, I didn't mean it quite so literally... but have it your way!"



chunky, functional and satisfying. The enemies are fast, randomise their approaches and leave you only slivers of time to react within. These features used to be the kind of thing that would leave you wondering whether your PC would be able to generate all this at once. Fear not. Requiem is exceedingly well optimised. Relative newcomers Cyclone studios have well and truly introduced themselves to the big time with this excellent title.

It scoons at a rate of knots on an MMX Voodoo or Half Life platform, and positively screams on

a V2/PII config at 800x600. It's a very well built, very nice looking, fun game to play.

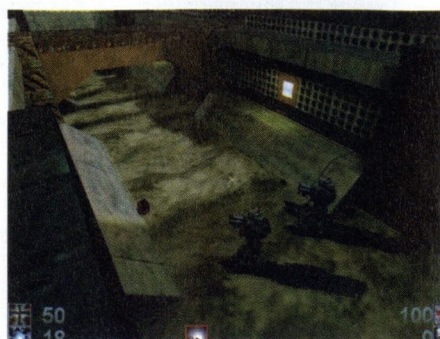
Plot schmot

Despite these highly positive aspects, where it falls down is in the story department. The story is well-conceived and well presented, but you will play for a long time, sometimes hours between cut-scenes or conversations. You almost forget what you were supposed to be doing, when a story section finally reminds you. It's a lot like the previous generation of FPS games, where the middle of the game was fleshed out with a few massive, tedious

levels. It's not quite that bad, but it's close.

In summary, Requiem is a superb new first person shooter of outstanding visual quality, with a great combination of magic rubbish and realistic simulation. Bit of a shame it plays like the previous generation of shooters, with the levels too big and the story spread a bit too thin. Though the special effects are first class.

Ed Dawson



PLUS+



www.3do.com/requiem

GOLD

90%

Category First Person Shooter
Players 1-8 LAN (IPX, TCP/IP), Internet, Modem, or Serial Link
Publisher 3DO
Price TBA
Rating MA +15
Available Now

For Fantastic level design, awesome models, gorgeous textures and neatly tuned gameplay. Excellent multiplayer game.

Against Storyline segments few and far between, sometimes illogical game pathways, rather simplistic play style, and simple objectives.

Need P166, 32 MB RAM, Win95/98, 116MB Hard Disk Space, 2MB SVGA video card, 4x CD-ROM drive.

Want P200, 64 MB RAM, 275MB recommended, 3Dfx or DirectX compatible accelerator

3D SUPPORT

All Voodoo cards, all Riva and TNT cards, Matrox G200, Permedia 2, all ATI Rage cards. Most Direct 3D compatible accelerators supported.

Mike Stewart's



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Mike Stewart

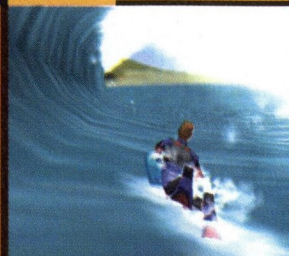
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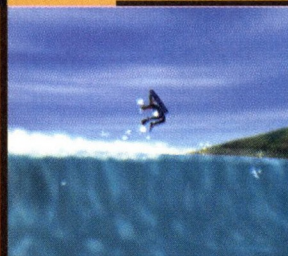
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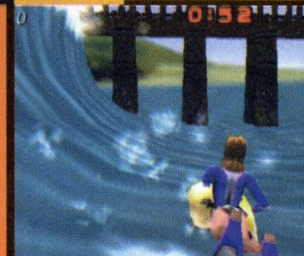
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MACHINES

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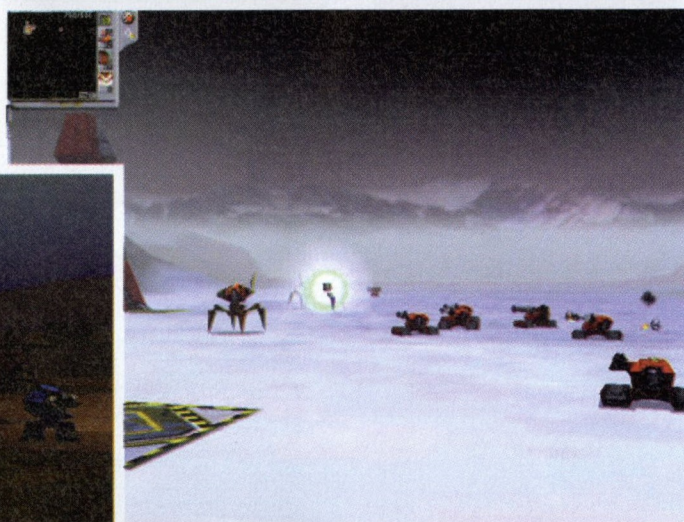
The combination of different gaming genres is the great myth of the industry. I'm trying to think of a title that has mixed very different kinds of play successfully - and I'm drawing a big blank (except for perhaps *Battlezone*). Great games generally stick to one thing and do it really well. How many hours have you spent on-line, belting around a labyrinth, just shooting people?? Yep, simplicity's the thing. So it's a brave move on the part of Acclaim to try and meld the two great acronyms of our time: RTS and FPS. Variety in play is Acclaim's goal and *Machines* is the game. Frankly, it's a damn fine effort as well. Take me to the future...

Interstellar colonisation

The year is 2136. Humankind has found that its greatest threat is due to overcrowding, since it was finally realised that war wasn't that much fun. So the people of Earth look to the stars for new homes. Light speed travel has been developed but is fatal to living creatures. While the technology is being developed to transport humans at light speed, Machines are sent out to prepare other worlds for colonisation. The Machines are sent off and begin their terraforming in anticipation of the human arrival. Then they wait. And wait.

Thinking machines

It finally becomes obvious that mankind isn't coming. Soon the machines look to new worlds to "colonise". Machine factions on two different planets, Eden 4 and Midian, come into contact and decide the universe wasn't such a good place without war after all. Each decide the other must be terminated and thus begins the



Vehicular abundance

The single player game is a series of missions that involve establishing and protecting a base, as well as destroying any enemy machines and bases. At your disposal, you have civilian and military forces. The civilian units include constructors, transporters, technicians, etc. These form part of the infrastructure of your base. They build structures, transport resources, research technology, etc. The military forces form your army against the Midian enemy. The types of military units available include the Reaper, a quadruped walker; the Grunt, a rolling infantry unit; the Knight, a hovering unit and the Wasp, a flying unit. There are many others and through research and improvements, additional weapons for your entire army become available.

Long term strategy

Unlike other games, the distinction between civilian and military units exists even in research and production. You need to build a separate factory and research facility for civilian and military research. Research, as always, is extremely important. In the military research,

500 year long machine wars. Eden 4 has created a number of experimental autonomous AI processors to oversee the battle against the Midians. So you are created and must take control of a base with the aim of destroying your enemies. There are no humans in *Machines* and this worried me at first. Could you really be interested in the battles of machines? It bothered me until I actually started playing the game. Like most of these kinds of games, the story is fairly irrelevant. I have a feeling there may be a twist in this tale, anyway.





Finally a challenger to Battlezone! Machines is for those who like more strategy and less action.

there are two paths that you can choose to follow. The heavy artillery units are at the top of each of the paths. So you can choose between pursuing one path to have a big hitter early on or both to get more variety in units. Machines has a satisfying level of depth in research without it becoming obscure.

The big wheel

There is a nice logic to the units and buildings of your bases. It's not merely a fact of making sure you have a mine that is producing mineral ore. You also need somewhere to store it AND transporters to move it there. Similarly you can't just build a research facility and expect the ideas to come pouring out. You need to manufacture technicians to do the research. And just like the military units, these units can be updated to do different tasks and work more efficiently. These things help in the realism of the game. Nothing is isolated in a real military campaign - so why should the travails of robots in the distant future be any different? Behind every big artillery unit, there is a Geo Locator that found the mineral site to produce it and so on. It's a big circle of robot life and the more depth and options the better!

Standard RTS shenanigans

As a Real Time Strategy title, Machines plays much like its contemporaries. The basic construction of a base, effective combination of units and mineral resource management scenario. Although not new by any means, there is the added consideration of terrain height to



spice up the action. There is a nice amount of control over units, with various specific orders as well as the customary "attack", "patrol" and "stand ground" commands. You can also form squads of units that can be hotkey selected. It's all successfully done. If Machines had just been an RTS game, it would still be a great game but it would just be another in a long line of great RTS titles. This is where the inclusion of the FPS element counts as a big plus for this Acclaim title.

First-person spanking

During play you can switch to any selected unit and control them first hand, rather than direct them from your third person view. Ever felt frustrated 'cos that

bloody unit stayed immobile while being spanked by the enemy? Machines is the ticket! The reason that the combination of genres works so well, is that it is so seamless in Machines. At a crucial moment you can take the reins and direct your unit with more precision. The combative display is much like any vehicle FPS. There is a radar of units, with both your allies and ene-



mies displayed. The mouse is used to aim and arrows keys to move your unit. You have control of basic movements as well as turret rotation in some machines - so make sure you know which way you're facing! There is only one basic weapon for most machines, which it's really a problem since you're not generally in one for extended periods. At any time you are able to leave the unit and return to managing all of your forces.

I think this is a winner because of the opportunities it offers the gamer. Think of all the possibilities in multiplayer! You could have a purely tactical strategic game or large scale battles, having individual control of one unit amongst an army. The action side of the proceedings is a nice addition to a basic strategy title, rather than an equal element. However, it does offer another way to affect the outcome. Bravo Charybdis!

Scheming opposition

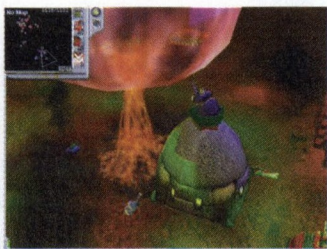
The A.I. of your Machine foes is convincing. If your tactical planning tends to the repetitive, your enemy will often look for another way around to get to you. Be aware that you're dealing with another force much like your own, researching and assembling an army to



defeat you - they don't lie in wait to be punished.

All class

The mood of Machines is all class. From the pre-mission briefings to in-game niceties, this game rocks. An example is the fact that you can only search the map that surrounds one of your units - if you go any further, interference clouds over your screen because you're out of range. The game screen is nicely laid out and this makes for easy, intuitive play. Yep, Machines is a joy!



fear single player Machines may become a little repetitive. For some, there won't be the challenge and narrative drive to sustain these missions. On the other hand, this will be a joy in multiplayer. It makes more sense if it's your best friend you're beating the pants off, rather than some soulless supercomputer. On similar lines, Machines may be a little dry unless you're a devoted strategist. Multiplayer is limited to 4 players, which leaves it more in the strategy camp.

Share the joy

The only real criticism I can level against Machines is that the single player is probably weaker than multiplayer. The game's A.I. is well up to scratch but I

It's fairly reasonable though when you think that once one of your army is destroyed you can take control of any of the others. There's precious little to complain about and really, Machines is super-duper gaming!

Worthy RTS action

The fearless Charybdis have pulled it off with Machines, well worth the attention of any strategy gamer who likes varied, challenging and long-term play. The effective inclusion of the First Person Shooter option is a great addition and this offers a new perspective in tactical gaming. Rather than being an equal combination of the two genres, this is more a main course of strategy with a healthy side

salad of action. Regardless, the game stands up well just as RTS. Machines is a great title that any serious strategy gamer should really consider.

John Dewhurst

PLUS⁺



www.acclaim.net/games/machines/index.html

GOLD

90%

Category RTS/FPS
Players 1-4 (TCP/IP), 1-2 (IPX), 1-4 (IPX - requires two boxed versions)
Publisher Acclaim/Charybdis
Price \$TBA
Rating G
Available now

For Great strategy title with effective action option, nice ambience, great controls.

Against This game requires patience! Mainly strategy with the FPS as a bonus. Will be tedious for the more restless gamers.

Need Win 95/98, P200, 32 MB RAM, 4x CD ROM, 4MB 3D card

Want PII 266, 64MB RAM, 3D card

3D SUPPORT

3dfx, TNT & most others



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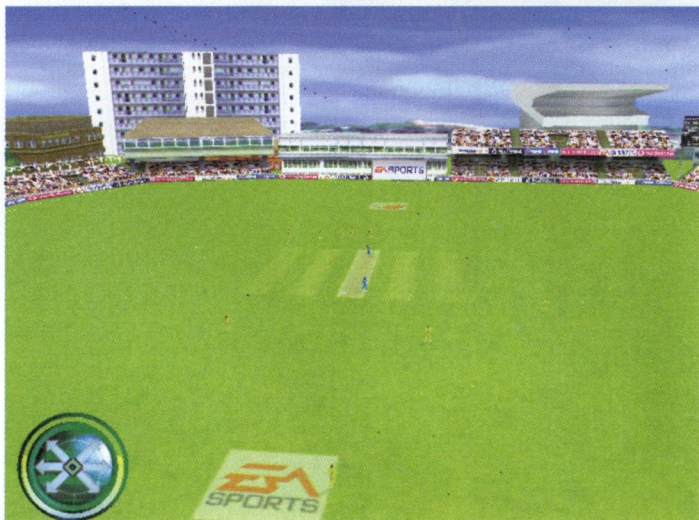
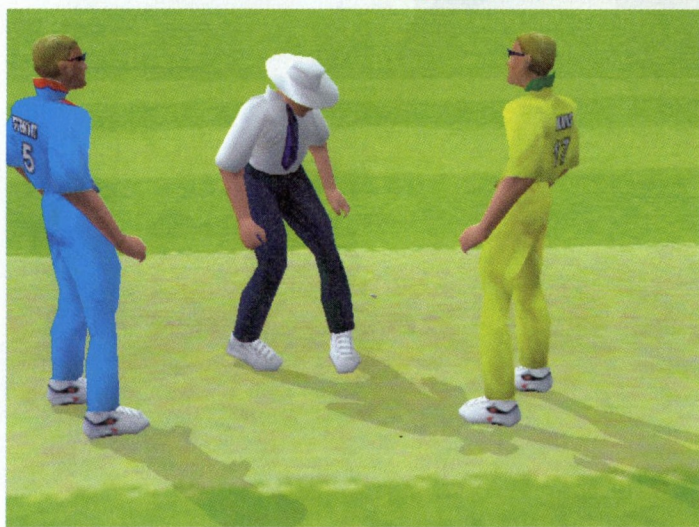
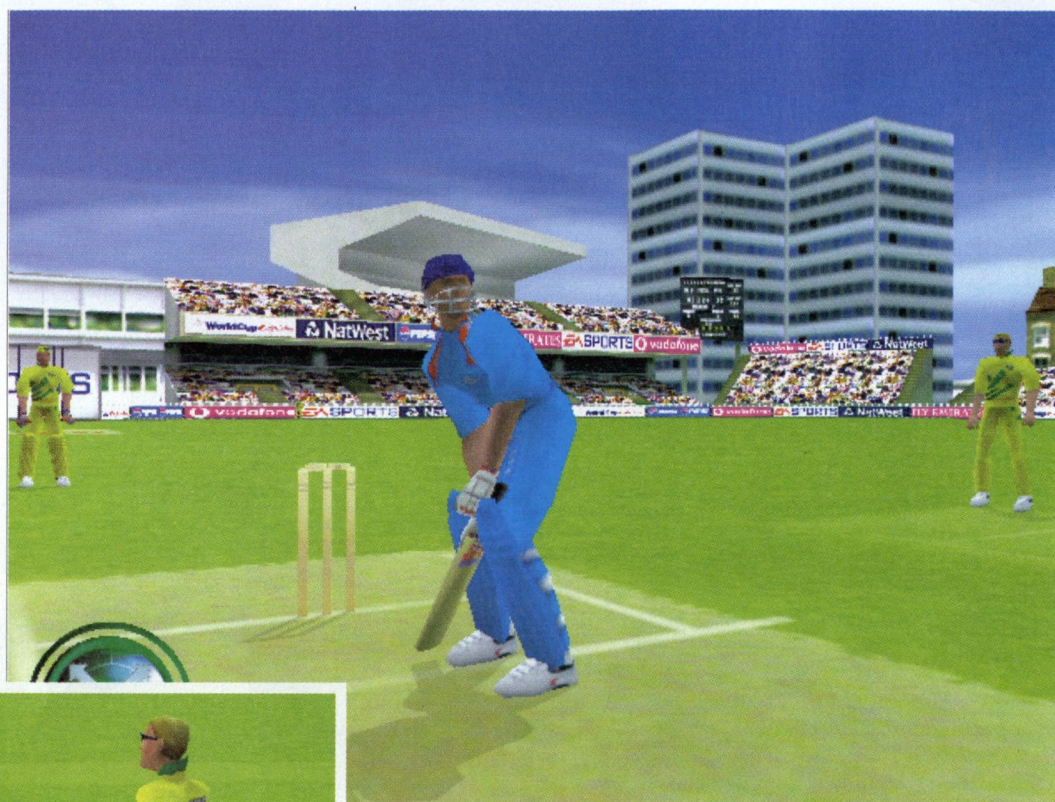
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Redefining Performance.

CRICKET WORLD CUP 99

Like Warney after a quick ciggy, this cricket sim leaves Andrew gasping for breath...

This is a game where you could grab a six-pack, warm up the BBQ, and start up a demo game between Australia and arch-rivals England and pretend to watch a full 50 over One Day International - and the beauty of it is, no ads! The detail is that good, the animation is that good and the AI and commentary is that good.

Of course, most of you will probably be sitting up to all hours of the night watching the real thing. You'll buy this game to PLAY it, so how does it play? The answer is quite well. With very limited controls, everything you need can be reached through the mouse, or with a few keys on the keyboard. A gamepad is an optional extra



(far left) The start of the match is temporarily delayed while the umpire attempts to remove Tony Greig's key from the pitch

resented in all its glory. All twelve official teams are provided with all possible players for each team. So you don't just get the top 12 or

that may feel more comfortable for some, but, personally, the analogue control of the mouse was most rewarding for me.

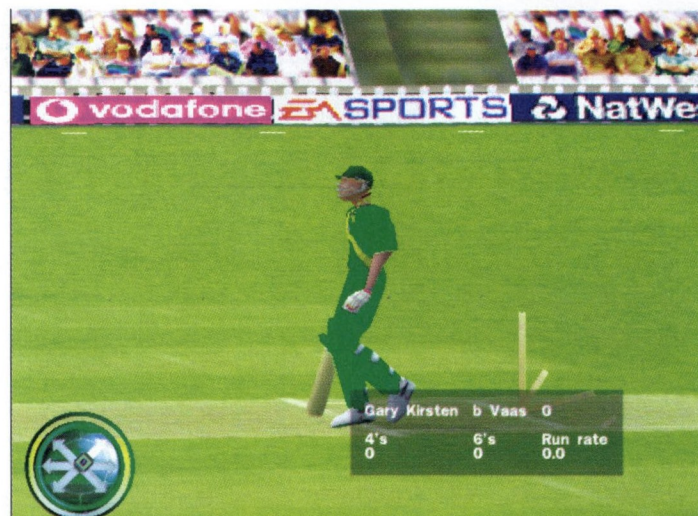
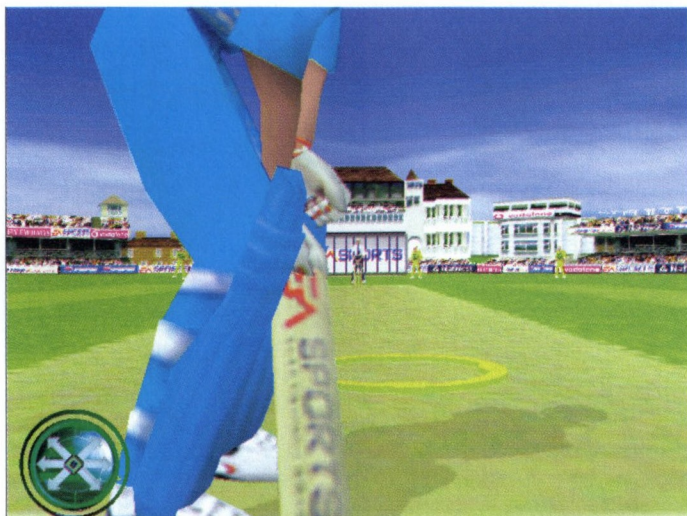
First eleven

In terms of gameplay, comparing CWC99 with Shane Warne Cricket 99 is like comparing World Cup 98 with FIFA 98. In both cases, EA have taken a specific angle on the sport in question and fine-tuned the gameplay to match the atmosphere. Instead of providing a myriad of gameplay options, this means that only a select few - all revolving around the World Cup - are presented to the player. The World Cup is rep-

13 players, but 20+ batsmen, bowlers and all-rounders to sort out just the right type of team for your attack. When playing the World Cup, every single piece of data that could be mined out of the real World Cup is provided for. So the draw based on seeding has already been done, so that's the grouping that is available in CWC99 - there is no option to change this, unfortunately.

Silly mid-on

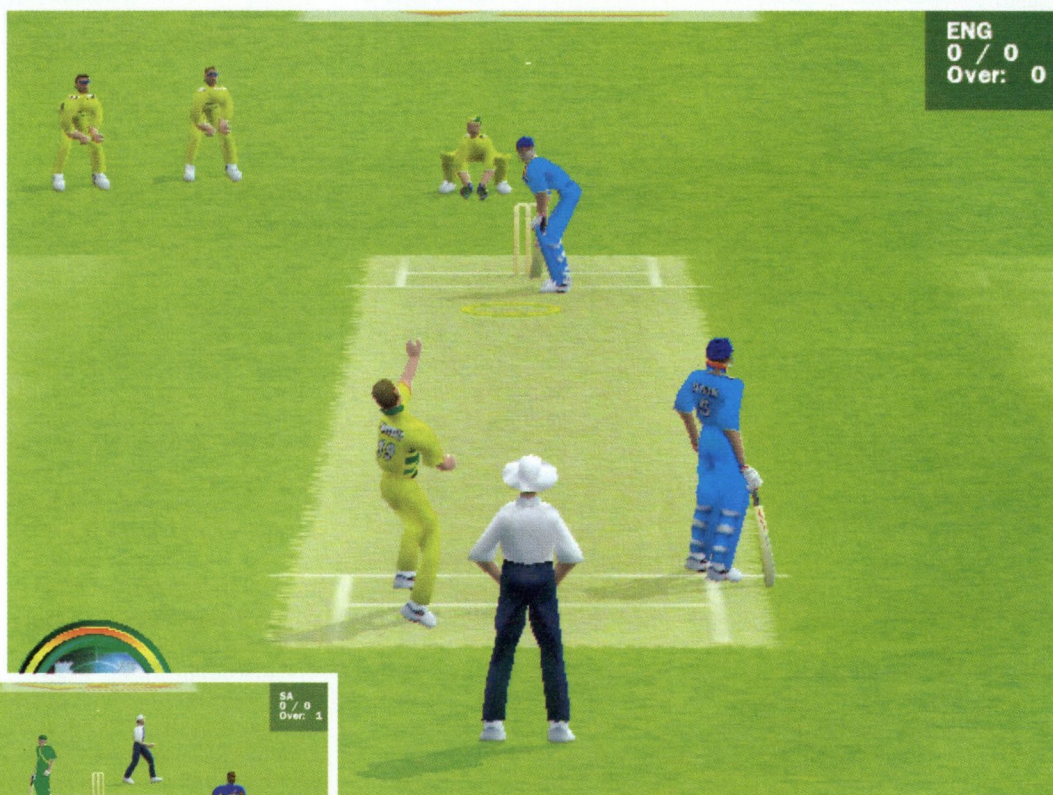
When choosing the game type, the choices are One Day International, World Cup, Super Six, and Practice. As I mentioned above, these are fairly limited



options but - hey - it's a World Cup sim, remember. As a quick run down, One Day Internationals provide a way to get a quick game in between two teams of your choice and at a location of your choosing. World Cup is the big one, starting with the two groups of 6 who all play each other and the top three from each move on to the finals. These finals are also known as the Super Six which provides for the next type of game - pick the 6 you want in the finals and start from there. Finally, Practice will take you to the nets and allows you to practice that batting technique until you can smash sixes at whim, or bowl middle stump every time.

Tickled on the legside

Every field is represented and modelled extremely well and is correctly proportioned. There are 21 fields catered for, and all have their distinctive landmarks and feel. When you see the Oval, you'll know it as the classic arena for the gentlemen's



(left) The South African batsman found it hard to concentrate while the opposition keeper burst into song behind the stumps.

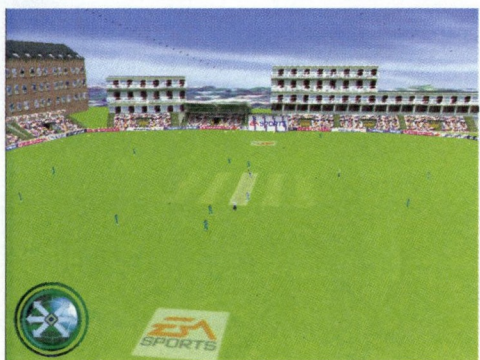
game that it is. The modelling of Lords itself will bring tears to the cricket fan's eyes when they see it in all its glory. Beware, because along with the extremely realistic models of teams, players and fields, comes a fairly in-depth weather model. This would be one of the first cricket action games to take rain affected play into account and even here the rules are followed strictly. Watch out if you're the second team and have to suddenly play catch up where before you were cruising steadily to an easy win.

Gotta light, Shane?

EA have decided to remove any option for human-controlled fielders. Codemasters attempted to get this right in Shane Warne and came close, but it was still unwieldy. Rather

than try to complicate matters, EA have instead provided a more arcade-ish approach and leave the player solely in control of batsman or bowler. This provides a nice degree of realism but would have been frustrating if the fieldsmen's AI was as slow-witted as Shane Warne's did. Luckily for us, the AI is instead fairly intelligent and shows some quick action when needed to try to get that run out. In a similar vein to Shane Warne Cricket, the multiplayer options are quite limited. To be quite frank, there is one multiplayer "option" - two players playing on the one PC - one controlling their team with the mouse and the other with the keyboard. C'mon, Cricket-game-developers, give us a bit more flexibility with the game.





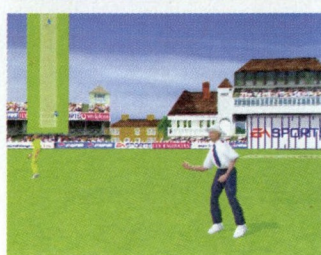
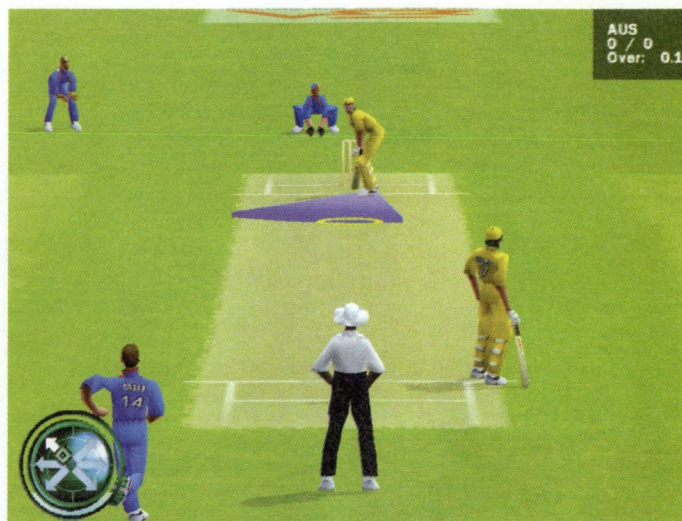
the nitty gritty detail. For example, at Lords, there are two additional views - Nursery and Pavillion. These mirror the real life placement of the cameras at Lords and provide a little more immersion into the game.

...the batsman's Willey

The commentary must be mentioned because it is so realistic you'd swear that Richie Benaud and company were sitting right behind you, commenting on each play as it happens. Their words are not limited to the generic statements utilised by many other titles, but instead have been tailored to incorporate individual players. This is an advantage of the tack that EA have gone with their "World Cup-only" game - there is only a

The bowler's Holding...

The number of camera angles is as bewildering as any EA Sports game can be. With fixed cameras such as Wide, Midwicket, Batsman and Bowler Stump cams, and the moving angles such as Delivery, Reverse Delivery, Batsman, Fielder and even Ball-Cam (one sure-fire way to get a headache), you're sure to find the shot you feel most comfortable with. Even here, the developers have gotten down to



One small flaw is that all the batsmen are portrayed as right-handers. What about us lefties!?

limited number of players that could be talked about, so it was relatively easy for them to make sure every player's name was recorded. Almost all have mug shots so you can remind yourself of how (un)attractive Darren Lehmann is, for example. The skills are beyond the usual batting, bowling and stamina. Features such as speed, awareness and reflexes are all represented as separate ratings, while things such as fitness, agility and aggression are also scored upon. The ever important catching and throwing skills are also present - Ricky Ponting's well-publicised arm shows up as an advantage here.

We like that joke

In line with the amount of detail in the rest of the game, at the completion of a match, there are a huge variety of reports that can be viewed. Not just the standard batting and bowling tables, but things much more interesting such as stroke placement for each individual batsman and the line and length for every ball broken down by bowler are represented on-field for a true review of how you performed. Consider all this in conjunction with the very attractive price point, and the timing of release being spot on with the World Cup in England itself, and it makes this title one that will likely sell extremely well right off the bat (couldn't resist).

Andrew Parsons

PLUS⁺



www.easports.com

GOLD

93%

Category Cricket Sim
Players 1-2 (same PC)
Publisher EA Sports
Price \$TBA
Rating G
Available Now

For Most realistic cricket sim yet seen. Well proportioned playing environment and team members, realistic ball physics.

Against A menu that at times is a little unintuitive. Power-hungry for fast-action periods. Multiplayer is a bit bodgy.

Need P166, 32MB RAM

Want P2-350, 64MB RAM

3D SUPPORT

Direct 3D only

LEADTEK

KILLS THE COMPETITION DEAD

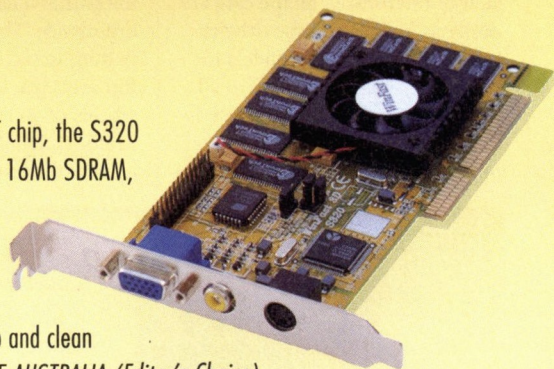


Winfast 3D S320

Based on the acclaimed 128-bit NVIDIA RIVA TNT chip, the S320 is a true 2D/3D card which comes standard with 16Mb SDRAM, and twice the fill rate of a Voodoo2.

'On our 3D WinMark tests, (the WinFast 3D S320) was in the top tier... The card aced our suite of game tests, delivering exceptionally crisp and clean rendering on D3D-based games.' — *PC MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA (Editor's Choice)*

'TNT outpaced Voodoo2 on six of six tests and finished well ahead in the overall score.' — *Gamespot UK*




Winfast 3D S310

Fully compatible with Voodoo 3D, Voodoo Glide and Direct 3D, the S310 is based around the 3Dfx Voodoo Banshee and is an affordable choice for gamers who want maximum compatibility and minimum price.

With a raw fill rate that's higher than Voodoo 2's, and doing away with the need for separate video and accelerator cards, the Banshee-based S310 is an unstoppable 2D/3D gaming card.

Tech-EXCEL
DISTRIBUTION

New South Wales 612 9417 7898
South Australia 618 8374 1981

 **Leadtek**

Rollcage

Losing all sense of direction in sleek and sexy racing machines of the future? Say no more...

Rollcage is the latest in the futuristic racing genre. Like Mad Max so many years ago, the hallmarks of Rollcage are high speeds and reckless disregard for property. The back story concerns illegal races amongst a group of highly talented drivers. The craze sweeps the nation of course and soon these racers grow tired of their lack of infamy, a case of I-was-into-it-before-it-got-popular (a common symptom of every fad in the history of the world). So they decide to get dangerous. The new races involve weapons and destruction. For the racing gamer this means explosions and mayhem aplenty! This is arcade racing with a twist.

Hoons with class

Rollcage's storyline is fairly standard. In the distant future, there are fangin' hoons dragging their Monaros all over the place and evading the law, much like Wipeout or Powerslide. However, Rollcage is like a dance party version of the future - all the cars are pretty as hell and all the drivers look like swanky Brit models in the NME. This isn't a fault at all, but it tells you where the game is coming from. Similarly, the physics model is not as realistic as

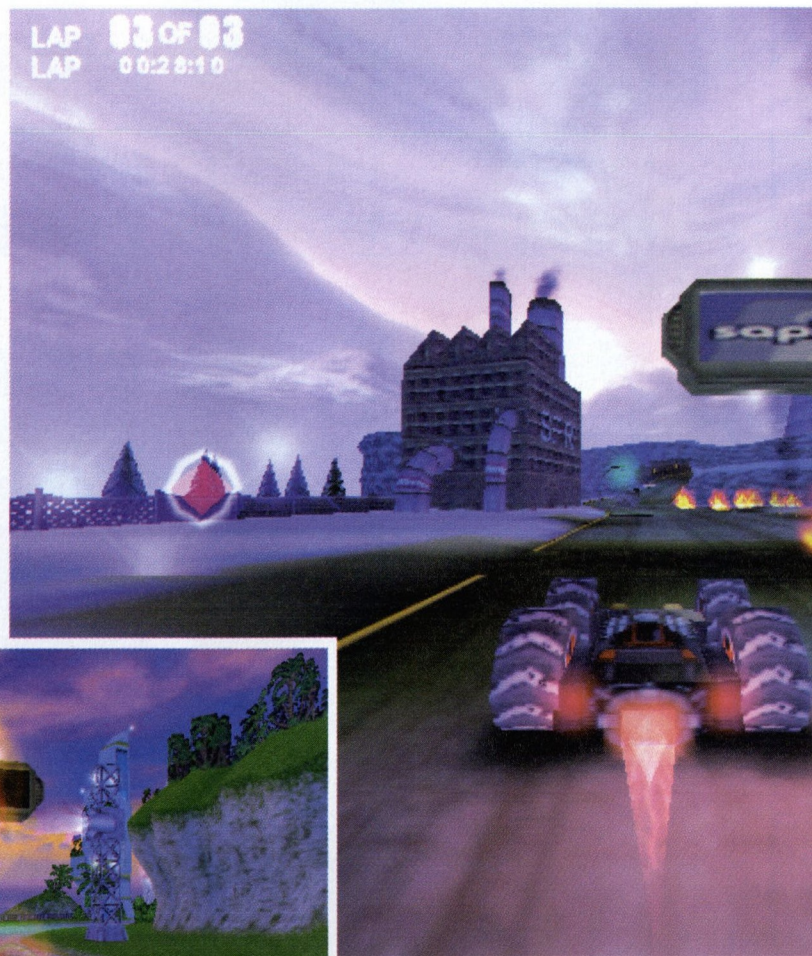
some other racing games but like I said, it's very action-driven and geared more for the thrill seekers than the go-kart enthusiast.



(right) Oh dear. Now this is what happens when you let the Aliens take the wheel. They end up driving on the ceiling.

Stylin'

The aim of Rollcage is to give the gamer a fast, furious racing experience. There is no top and bottom to your vehicle so if you flip over, you keep going (the wheels of your car are obviously mind readers). You scream around the track collecting vari-



ous weapons to aid your driving. By the way, your car is fairly indestructible, so you can use that as a weapon tool! As far as driving goes, gravity is fairly selective in this game - you can drive sideways on walls and upside down on tunnel ceilings but if there is nothing beneath your wheels you fall back to the ground. There's probably some spacey explanation for this in the game, like Tiberium tyres or lunar tractor beams. In the end though, it just adds up to really fun racing!

Exhilarating racing

One of the best things about Rollcage is the illusion of speed in the races. The cars go fast and it

feels like it! When you're new to the game with pedal to the floor, absolutely flying around the place and haven't a clue where the next turn is, it's damn exhilarating. Since the vehicles move at such high speeds, you'd expect your crashes to be dramatic and indeed this is the case. It seems gravity is not real fussy when you're bouncing off the walls either! As in all racing games, the driver who can keep at least three wheels on the road, is usually the victor. With the inclusion of weapons and no-holds-barred driving, Rollcage becomes an even more frantic event. Arcade racers of this breed tend to reward aggression, which is just the way we like it.



Lethal concrete

On each track, items are randomly placed for the cars to pick up and use against one another. These include missiles, shield, time warp and turbo. You have two slots for weapons so you can collect more than one, which is the maximum in most other games of this type. These weapons can be used in conjunction with a rather stylish addition to the racing vocabulary: on-track obstacles. If you have a missile and you're coming up to a building or overhead sign, auto-aiming lets you destroy that building. Why? So that all the vehicles following you can plough into the exploding concrete. It's a



neat idea and adds some explosive eye candy for our general enjoyment.

Burn-outs and doughnuts

Each of the cars handle quite differently to one another, and offer a fair amount of variety. Each driver also has a particular strength: it may be acceleration, speed, strength or grip. Generally for this type of racing, the heavier the car the better. Since it's so rough, the lightweights tend to fall about too much. This is not a problem when running into other drivers, but the course itself is not so discriminating. If you nudge a corner or an obstacle, you'll go head-over-heels no matter who you are! Each race has pile ups aplenty. Avoiding them is the trick.

Options a plenty

The game options are extensive enough to offer a variety of driving experiences. There is the arcade mode, league mode, multiplayer, practice, time trials and even a menu of hidden stages that can be unlocked by the skilled driver. The league mode consists of three leagues of three or four tracks: Gemini, Scorpio

and Taurus leagues. When you complete the first, you can progress through the other two. At the opening of the game, the difficulty is locked on easy. One thing that was a little disappointing was the fact that the first two leagues were so pitifully easy. On my first attempt I won both. Happily the third league is quite difficult and will take time to complete.

A wee bit easy

The only faults of this game concern variety and longevity. It's quite a one trick pony (but it's a bloody good trick!) and experienced racers might find it all a bit too easy. The multiplayer game will offer many great races, though will reward the lucky, not the skilled. This is where a game like Powerslide has it over Rollcage. Due to its very arcade nature, you might not play this for as long as others. However, for the more casual racer who digs a bit of biff, Rollcage is where it's at.

Let it all loose

Rollcage is a happy addition to a genre that is full of winners. Long after Wipeout 2097 should have been old hat, I still enjoy a game of it. Rollcage may not stand up so well in a year's time, but it will give many, many hours of gaming pleasure. It offers that kind of infectious, intense racing that perfectly suits its arcade sensibilities - you can smack into the sap in front of you, send rockets into buildings on the side of the road, and fall about comically in an indestructible car. So release that road rage here, mmkay? While certainly not a serious racing sim, it's not trying to be. For simple, fast paced arcade action, Rollcage is a winner.

John Dewhurst



The lighting and effects are nice, if a little on the EXXTREEEME!!! side of things.

PLUS+



GOLD

90%

Category	Arcade Racing
Players	1-2 (serial, modem), 1-4 (one machine), 1-6 (TCP/IP, IPX)
Publisher	Psygnosis
Price	TBA
Rating	G8+
Available	Now

For Terribly fast, fun racing, easy to get into, options galore, techno soundtrack to rock to millenium.

Against Arcade style perhaps a little too simple for the more skilled racer. Some will be frustrated by the lack of road holding in all vehicles!

Need P166, 16MB RAM, 4MB video card, 4x CD-ROM

Want PII 233, 32MB RAM, 8x CD-ROM

3D SUPPORT

D3D, Glide

Descent 3

The forgotten FPS classic returns, and this time you can go outside!

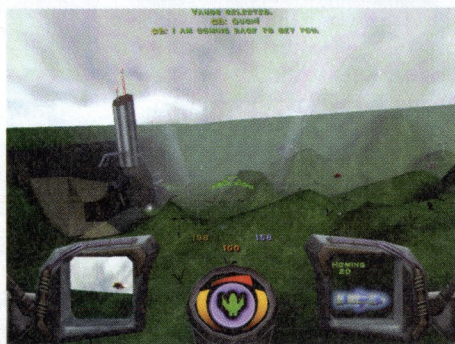
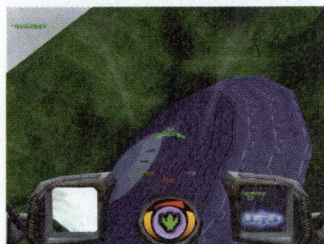
The Descent franchise is one that's managed to rather successfully stand the test of time. Descent, you see, was really the first game to feature a full 3D environment, as opposed to Doom's 2.5D (Doom featured a locked Y axis). Even the enemies in the original Descent were 3D objects. Considering that this was a long time before Quake, it's easy to show respect to a classic game with technology well ahead of it's time. Featuring the absolutely incredible fusion engine, alongside intensely gratifying and fun gameplay, Descent 3 continues the series' tradition of revolutionary gameplay and graphics.

One of a kind

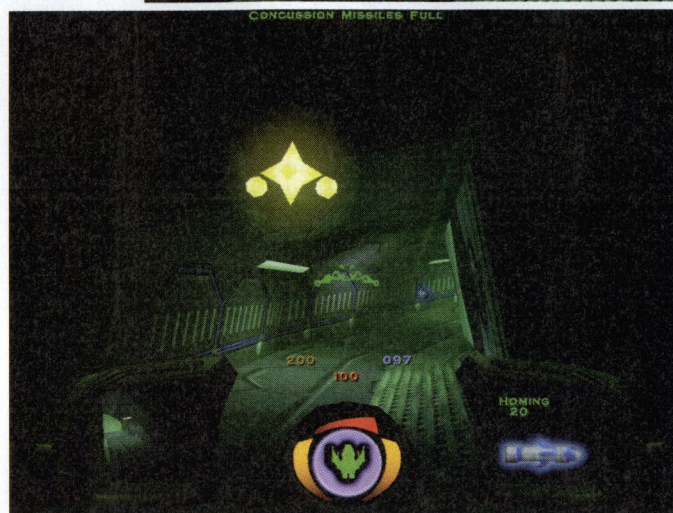
Although it's never really received much attention, I would categorise Descent as a genre within itself. Labelling it as a first person action game simply doesn't do it justice. Descent 3 is a much more dynamic experience. Firstly there's the missions. These are dynamic to the point that, upon starting said mission, you're given a series of objectives to complete and absolute freedom with which to complete them. Unlike Quake 2, which is also a first person 3D game that features objectives within a level, Descent 3 offers true freedom. The most striking aspect of the game is that there is no level loading to ever interrupt. Once you start a mission, you're placed inside a rather large 3D world (imagine a level approximately 15 times larger than a Quake 2 level) that constantly renders before your eyes - and that's no understatement.

The great outdoors

One of the more widely advertised aspects of Descent 3 is the



ability to go outside. This might not seem like a big deal until you actually play the game. The outside area consists of hills, valleys and entrances to mines, and to reiterate, all rendered in real time with, as I said, no level loading. On one particular mission, you enter a mine shaft



(left) Fresh air! The ability to travel outside in Descent 3 is a big plus, though most of the action is below the surface

from the outside into a gigantic room with a locked door. Blowing up the two small generators powering the door locks opens up to a shaft that heads straight down. You turn around and look through the entrance and see the sky of the outside world above you, then look down the shaft which seems to endlessly descend forever into the depths. It's eerie, a little terrifying and even claustrophobic. Absolutely brilliant stuff.

Little buddy

One of the aspects that turned people away from the first two Descents was the utterly

confusing array of corridors, rooms and complex 3D environments. In Descent 2, the guide bot was introduced to help navigate the confusing passageways, but more often than not the little bot's consistent fluttering around could become more of a nuisance than assistance. In Descent 3, the guide bot is a perfect addition to the game, making navigation a lot easier and the game a lot faster. The guide bot now begins docked with your ship and to use it you simply release him. The bot can lead you to weapon powerups, extra shields, extra power, to an enemy or to a mission objective, or if you have no use for him, can be redocked with your ship.

In a squeeze

Play Wing Commander 5 or Freespace for a while and it's not hard to become bored. With the wide open expanse of space combat becomes little more than flying round and round in circles and firing off a shot with the appropriate lead to hit the target - yawn. In startling contrast, here you can hurtle down a corridor of a mine shaft into a large open room where there are normally numerous enemies awaiting you. Overwhelmed you fly towards a



doorway and into a narrow hyper-claustrophobic hallway, the enemy robots hot on your trail. You keep running but they're gaining on you, so you turn around to face your adversaries cramped within a tiny space. Here the animation and AI of the robots is really rather amazing. Some robots will back off and try to hit you with missiles or energy weapons. Other robots taking the more "hands on" approach will attach themselves to your ship with their many arms (some

robots look like a giant squid) and try to cut their way in.

Flank your rear

Sure it's just a game but these can be truly terrifying situations, especially with the lights turned off and the sound up loud. Forget fire fights over long distances, the robots in Descent 3 make it personal. Not only is the robot "in your face" but you can hear the sound of metal on metal as it tries to rip your ship apart, with a force feedback joystick, you'll even feel

the shudder as it grips your ship. I could rave and rave about Descent 3, but the best way to describe how superb the game is involves this play example, which really happened to me. Hurling down a long dark corridor an enemy robot suddenly appears ahead. No problem, I think, as I let a concussion missile fly, the robot deftly evading it. I check my rear view MFD and realise he has a friend that's cleverly flanked my rear. From the rear speakers I hear the sound of a missile launch and strafe left, the missile barely missing me but hitting the robot ahead.

Roasted squid

Ha ha, I pronounce, as I turn around to dispatch the robot behind me. A fire fight ensues, when suddenly I feel a shudder through the force feedback joystick and watch my shields drain. Checking the rear view MFD, I realise another robot has engaged me whilst I was preoccupied.

Shields getting dangerously low, I switch to homing missiles and launch a salvo to destroy the second target. Spinning around to take on the squid-like robot behind me, the sounds of the explosion move perfectly from the front to rear speakers. The robot is firmly attached to my ship so I bounce off the walls, feeling the force feedback kick each time. It detaches and comes round to the front. Another shudder as it



Aarrgh! Nasty creepy baddy bot! Die! This particular guy is known as Old Scratch (for the obvious reasons)

attaches again, this time though I can see it's fiendish mandibles trying to rip through the metal of my ship. I recoil in my seat and switch to napalm, dousing it in super heated fire. The robot explodes, and the flames from the napalm gun eventually die down returning the corridor to darkness.

Pure gaming brilliance.

Jere Lawrence

PLUS+

DESCENT 3

www.interplay.com

PLATINUM

95%

Category	Corridor shooter
Players	1-Multi
Publisher	Interplay
Price	\$TBA
Rating	M
Available	Now

For Incredible 3D engine. Totally engaging gameplay. Guide bot makes managing the missions much easier

Against Bringing up the guide bot menu pauses the game, breaking the flow. You can't assign hot keys to guide bot functions.

Need P200, 32MB RAM, 3D accelerator

Want PIII/300, 64MB RAM, Voodoo3/TNT2, 3D sound

3D SUPPORT

All major cards

Warzone 2100



In the future, pop bands will evolve to their highest form - 5 prettyboys dancing in sync. Laaadies and gentlemen, may I present Warzone 2100!

People aren't very hopeful about the future. We think about a century from now and see social disorder, disease, the end of the world. I'm hard pressed to think of a futuristic game or movie that offered a rosy view of the next millenium(s). Since too much is barely never enough, Eidos presents us with another post-apocalyptic nightmare game. Here is humanity gone wrong - after several thousand years of culture, man goes primal as those who remain fight for survival. Here is Warzone 2100. The future of our world can't be as bad as all that, can it? Bah humbug!

Post-apocalypso

In 2085, after NATO collapses, the NASDA (North American Strategic Defence Agency) establishes the satellite defense array, to protect against nuclear war. Well, surprise-surprise the system goes haywire and destroys every major city in the world. Some 15 years later, a group of survivors make a home in an abandoned military base and begin The Project: they set out to rediscover technology that had been lost in the nuclear winter that levelled humanity. It's



You can tell it's the future, because the only things that work properly are the guns, tanks and missiles



Scavenging hordes

Warzone 2100 is Real Time Strategy that has you on a well-worn track. The single player game is mission based, each mission with a number of objectives. The business of strategy is establishing bases, managing

resources, manufacturing units to expand and protect your structures, researching technology and battling the hordes of scavengers that are everywhere on the desolate surface of Earth. The nice touch is that through the missions, you continue with

the structures and units that you made and used in the previous mission. Units remain where they were at the end of the last mission. So it's more of a long term, cumulative and realistic campaign, rather than a series of unconnected missions.

The single player mission begins with a small base starting with some basic tanks & trucks. You must expand on the base, building a research facility, power generators as well as other units. The resource that you have to be careful with is oil. As you find new sources, you can build new oil derricks. It isn't just a matter of building units to surround your base and roam around the countryside. You have to seriously consider the defense of your base. As the game progresses, you can surround your base with walls, tank traps, sensor towers, machine gun bunkers and others. So that while you're bopping the other guys' heads, your base has some protection.

Artefactology

As your goal is to piece together the wealth of knowledge that has been lost, you must search for and gather artefacts of technology. This



Cold War fears sent 100 years into the future, only this time it's the U.S., and not the Red Peril, that destroys the world. We can only hope by that time, all the people of humanity will be scratching their heads and saying, "Those people from the twentieth century were REALLY paranoid."





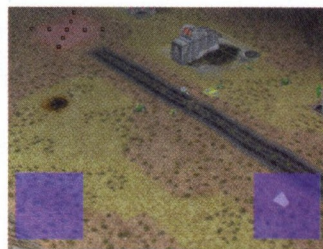
(right) In the future all post-apocalyptic wastelands will bear striking resemblance to George St in Sydney. Huge, gaping holes everywhere

can then be researched. Missions often require a certain research task to be completed. These in turn allows expansions on your structures and new designs for your units. The design option allows you to manufacture new units using various elements from your other units. It's a pretty good idea but don't think it's like Civilization in regards to research. The technology comes to you without too much effort. The research is all very convenient and not particularly relevant. This isn't necessarily bad, it just means that you are meted out new units as the game progresses. By having to design the units, it SEEMS that you have been given a certain amount of freedom to come up



with new crafts. So there's a fairly good balance between giving you new units and needing to be creative.

You can choose the main body, the turret and propulsion for your craft. The skill is in the customisation of units for your specific situation. Should you use tank tracks or a hover base? Flamers or machine guns? It all needs to be taken into consideration. Generally, you can come up with all the units possible by trying every single combination. Later in the game, you need to consider the cost of construction, combinations of units and balancing your units against those of your enemy to come up with a powerful, effective force.



Command control

A complaint often levelled at these games is that you have no control over unit movement, especially in a battle situation. Here's where Warzone comes up a treat. You can preset the conditions of battle that each unit will fight under. You choose what range they should attack from (close, medium or long), what their orders are in regards to battle (attack everything, only shoot when fired upon, ceasefire) and



what damage the unit should take before retreating (medium damage, high damage, fight to the death!). I like this a lot, since it avoids most of the frantic unit clicking that can go on. It gives you more control of your units than simply choosing their placement on the map.

There are a lot of nice touches here that make the game truly enjoyable. You have the ability to make preset squads of units that can be easily selected and ordered. Another nice addition is the ability to attach offensive units to a sensor - making early detection of oncoming units possible. It's great to see that terrain height is being used in Warzone 2100. There are hills in the landscape that offers great advantage to the higher units. All of this adds to the realism of the game.

Warzone 2100 is a super game which expands well on the strategy genre. The control over



units is great and it's a good example of very accessible gaming. You'll get the hang of it really quickly. Beyond that it lacks the atmosphere of some other RTS titles - the story's a bit thin off the ground and it's battle plain and simple. That said, multiplayer gaming with Warzone would be fantastic. For fans of the genre, Warzone 2100 is close to a must-have.

John Dewhurst

PLUS+



www.eidosinteractive.com

88%

Category Real Time Strategy
Players 1-2 (modem, serial), 1-7 (IPX, TCP/IP)
Publisher Eidos Interactive
Price \$TBA
Rating G
Available Now

For RTS that is accessible and great fun, control over units is terrific.

Against Lacks the atmosphere that it should have, perhaps a little straightforward.

Need P166, Win95/98, 32MB RAM, 2MB SVGA Card, 4MB 3D card, 8x CD ROM

Want P233, 4 MB D3D 3D card, 16x CD ROM

3D SUPPORT
D3D, Glide, software

Championship Manager 3

"Civilization with footballs," says David. Er.. Right.

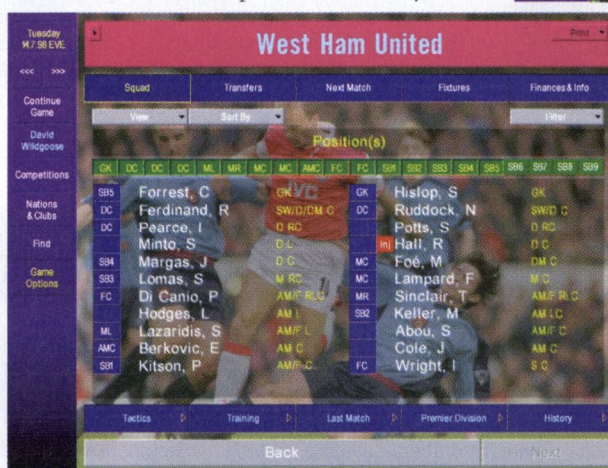
A game whose primary visual content features hundreds of dull, static pictures of footballers and football stadia? A game that distinctly lacks anything remotely resembling animation? A game whose only concession to our aural faculty is a crowd noise that goes "Roar" and occasionally "ROARI"? A game that possesses all the scintillating sex appeal of an Excel document? A game that takes an interminable amount of time to do seemingly very little at all? You've gotta be kidding! Bor-RING!

Well, that's Ben's reaction out of the way. For the rest of us, then, Championship Manager 3 is addictive, absorbing game-play of the highest calibre. Of course, I recognise that to the ignorant outsider CM3 may give a damn convincing impression of being anything other than a game, but... But... Oh, they just wouldn't understand.

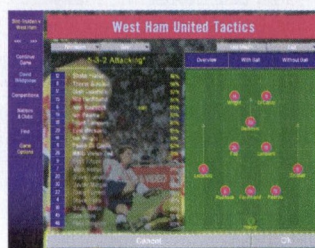
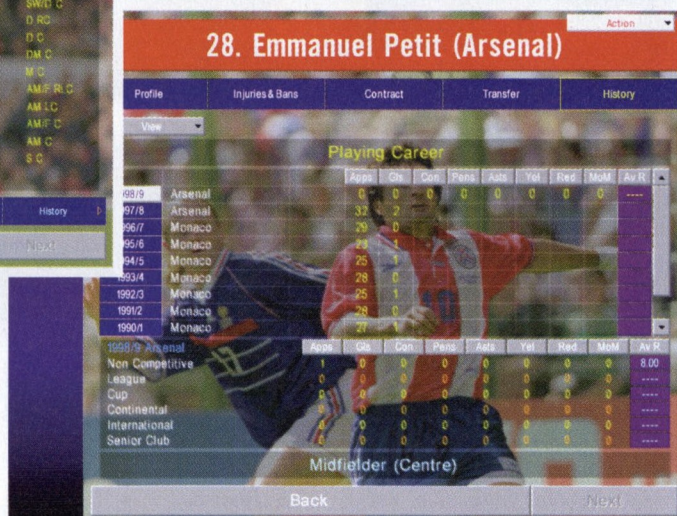
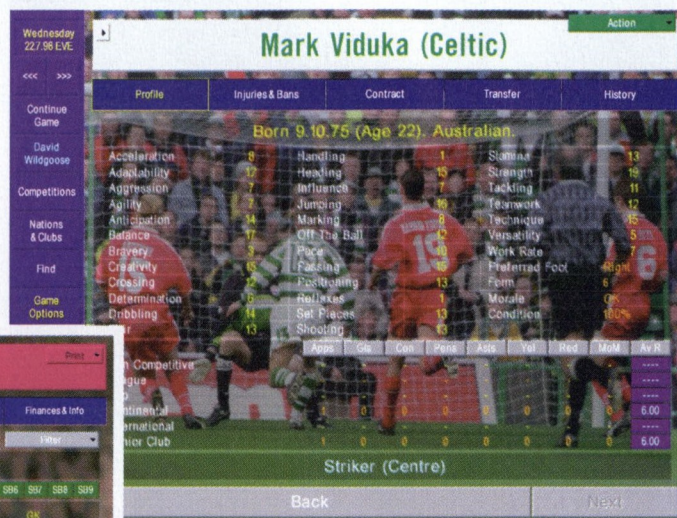
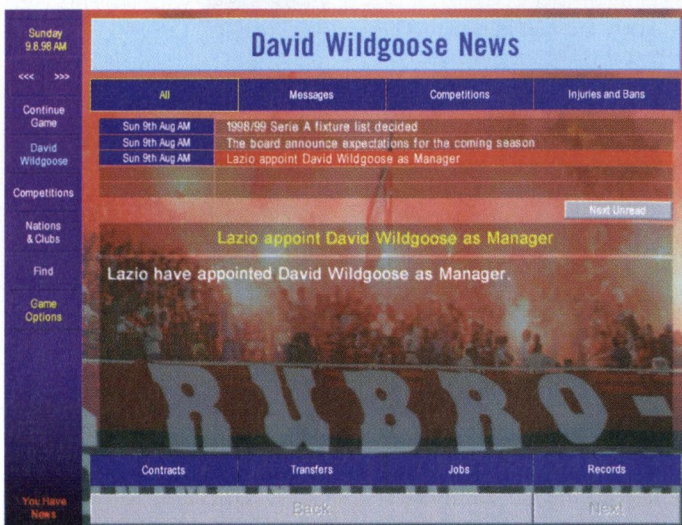
'Ere we go...

Rather predictably, you are given the task of managing a football club in one of fifteen countries throughout the world.

Indicative of the global nature of the sport - it is, as Les Murray always points out, the World Game - there are leagues, both major and minor, from which to choose in places as diverse as Argentina and Sweden, as well as the expected likes of Italy,



(below) We can finally reveal the secret of Lazio's extraordinary success this season... (above right) Authenticity is one of CM3's strengths - all real players and teams

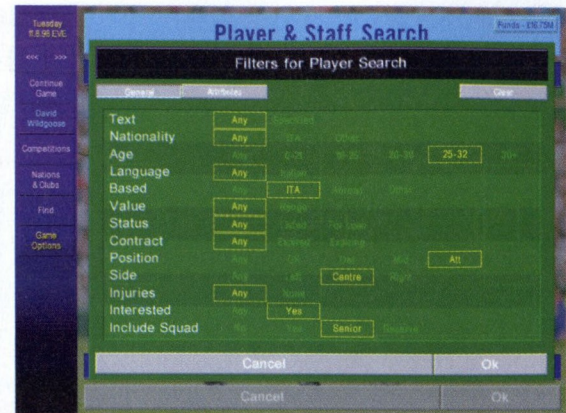
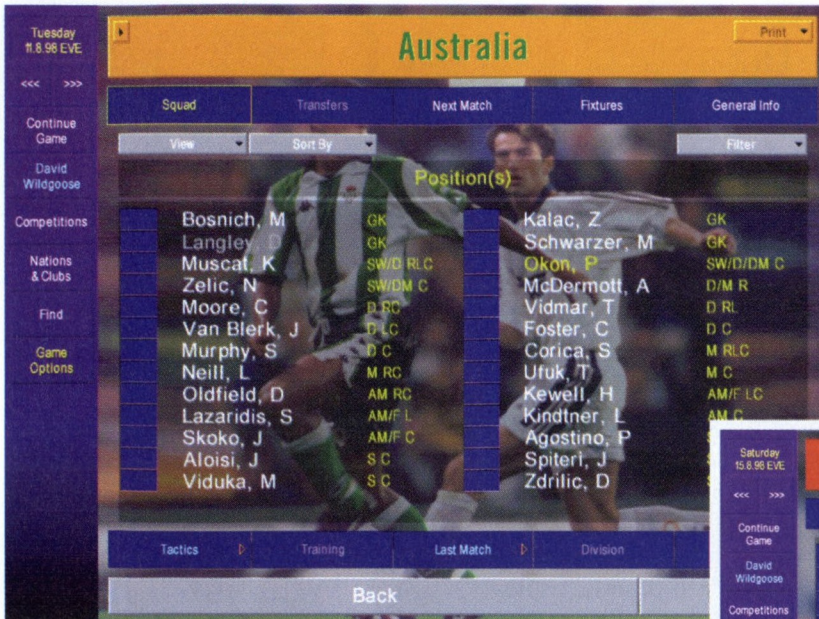


England and Spain. In addition to selecting a club to manage, you must pick a nationality which will bear upon the game in unexpected ways. Unlike previous CM games - and, indeed, any football management titles I can think of - the language you speak has at least some effect on the relationship you have with your players. Similarly, every player has varying language skills that influence the ability they have to adapt to each club they join. And, if you think that's unnecessarily complicated and

anal, then, please, do not read any further. Prolonged contact with this game, even merely reading about it, has been known to diminish one's social skills and attractiveness to the opposite sex to almost infinitesimal proportions. Just one of the reasons why Gareth was encouraged to leave the mag, actually. But I digress.

'Ere we go...

Responsibilities of your job as manager include selecting a side and devising the tactics to play



(above) Aberdeen versus Reggiana? Yep, CM3 has absolutely everything you could possibly want...

each match, dealing in the transfer market, organising the training of your first team and reserve squads, employing coaches and scouts to ease your workload, and monitoring the club finances to avoid turning into, say, Crystal Palace. You achieve all this through negotiating a series of elegantly designed menus. Where other games present you with tiny, meaningless icons or clumsy pictures of offices, CM3 has a menu on the left side of the screen that uses real words that mean something. Enhancing the intuitiveness to untold degrees, you can also click on player and club names on any screen and go straight to more detailed information. The news service provided each day fills you in on all the happenings in your chosen league(s) as well as significant events from around the world. Such is the ease of navigating your way through this game, you will likely despair at the cack-handed attempts of all future games to design a workable interface. Sure, CM3 is never going to win awards for beauty, yet it thrashes all and sundry in terms of user-friendliness.

'Ere we go...

In my first season with West Ham, I began the off-season by arranging a friendly against non-league Barrow. Opting for an attacking line-up to exploit my team's undoubted superiority, I

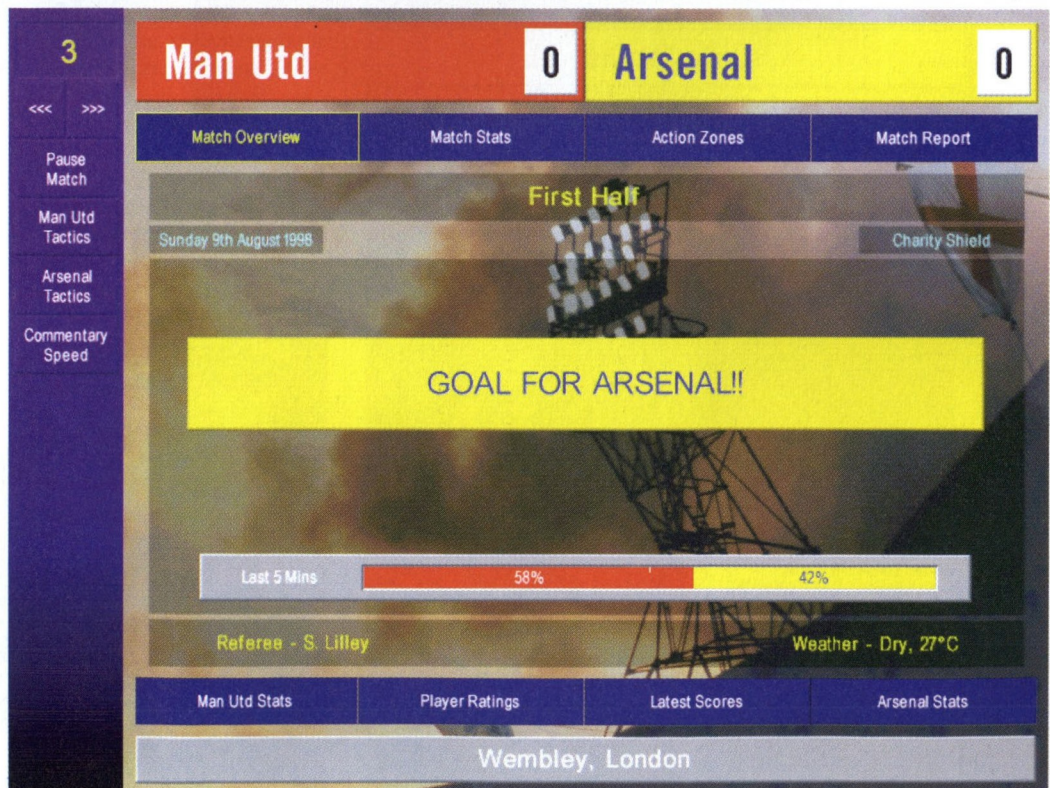
chose a 3-4-3 formation from the extensive list of predefined tactics and instructed wing-backs Lazaridis and Sinclair to push forward at every opportunity. Berkovic was handed a free role in midfield, while even Ferdinand joined in the attack from his sweeper position. Needless to say, my arrogance was my undoing as Barrow's brutal midfield closed me down and almost caught out my thin defence several times. Final score: 0-0.

'Ere we go...

For the first game of the season proper, I was at home to Manchester United - with recent form suggesting a heavy loss. Ringing the changes, I brought in Foe to anchor the midfield at the expense of Di Canio, utilising a custom-made

3-5-2 Diamond formation.

Telling the defence to mark man-to-man, the midfield to adopt a pressing style and the forwards to track back whenever possible, the mighty Hammers were ready for a dogged counter-attacking game. It paid dividends immediately -





Foe was impregnable, while Kitson's instruction to shoot from long range was rewarded with a goal midway through the first half. Once in the lead, I dropped the wing-backs deeper, subbed the tenacious Lomas for Berkovic and left only Lampard to support the forwards. Final score on a glorious afternoon at Upton Park: 1-0.

This brief tale (although, it must be said, did take an astonishing several hours to play) was intended to illustrate just some of the amazing array of options available in the game.

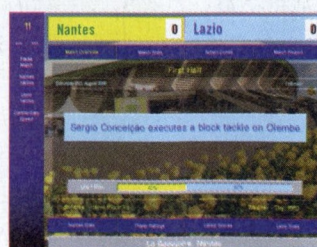
Compared to previous CM titles, this third iteration swamps the others in terms of depth. Far more complex match orders can now be issued, both on an individual and team basis. These encompass passing and tackling styles, who should take the various set-pieces, and decisions regarding pushing forward or staying back, shooting on sight or showing more patience, zonal or man-to-man marking, even whether to come up for free-kicks. At any stage during a match you can also set the ideal positioning of each

player when the play is in a certain section of the field, depending upon whether your team is in possession of the ball or not. Scouts function more realistically than before - you post them somewhere (with general or specific instructions) and they will report back with suggestions on a regular basis.

'Ere we go...

Without question, comprehensive is the only word to be applied to this statistical behemoth of a game. And that, though, is both its virtue and vice. If you've exhausted the possibilities of CM2 and feel like more, then of course you need CM3. However, those new to management games may well find the whole thing too intimidating. I'd advise them to try either a demo of this or get hold of CM2 and check it out.

David Wildgoose



(left) Ah, the hallmark of any great strategy game - percentage breakdowns of all the crucial info at a glance

PLUS+



For news and match reports from all over the world, one of the best football sites around is Soccernet (www.soccernet.com).

85%

Category Strategy
Players 1-8
Publisher Eidos
Price \$TBA
Rating G
Available Now

For Fantastic depth, both in terms of the extent of what's simulated here and the wealth of stats and options with which to fiddle around. Extremely addictive.

Against A daunting prospect for CM novices, maybe even for veterans too. Playing a whole season will eat weeks out of your life and, as such, many will find the immediate rewards of CM2 more appealing. Monstrous system reqs when running multiple leagues.

Need P166, 32MB - this is a bare minimum for one league.

Want PII 300, 128MB RAM - to run three or more leagues.

YOUR NAME IS "MALACHI."
THAT'S ANCIENT HEBREW FOR
BAD ASS MOTHER



REQUIEM

AVENGING ANGEL™

3DO



PC
CD
ROM



Pelt 990427

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Army Men 2

Remember how you'd set light to any manner of plastic toys at your disposal? Come re-live your childhood

How do you make a fairly violent game that offends no-one? Metaphorically, dear reader. A G rated war game where you see your enemies shriek & perish painfully, run about aflame before collapsing, their bodies melt before your eyes - hey it must be about toy plastic men! We've seen the cult of the little things come around time and again (Toy Story, A Bug's Life, Small Soldiers) and it has proven to be rather popular. Give the little monsters sharp tongue, iron determination and a dash of comic foolishness and hey presto! You have a winner. Army Men scored an impressive 85% in our October '98 issue, so they must be doing something right. Not wanting to keep their fans waiting, here's the sequel in fairly record time. Cover me - I'm goin' in...

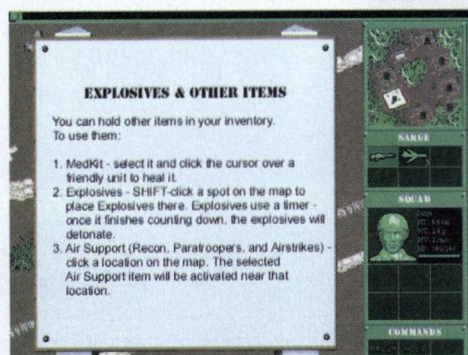
Little green men

Army Men 2 sees the return of your faithful green combat hero Sarge, leading his charges through the horrors of war - war with other little plastic men. You control Sarge and various

"greens" through successive missions in your continuing conflict with the "tans", a rival force. So here's where you pack on the irony: they're green figurines but it's all drums-of-war, stern voices and cigar chewin'. War is hell in the sandpit. These soldiers are little but that doesn't mean they can't pack some heat.

Pro-active displacement

For your green plastic boys to come to grips with the tan inva-



The search for funky new 'RTS' themes continues... What's baffling is the fact that this 'novelty' idea of the plastic soldiers has made it's way to a sequel.

sion (send 'em back to where they came from! Dirty TANS! One playground! ONE PLAYGROUND!), you're going to need some impressive pieces of firepower. Your primary character,

Sarge starts out with a default machine gun, with unlimited ammo. This can be upgraded to the auto-rifle, then varying kinds of machine gun. Along the way, you can pick up various other

weapons including the flamethrower, the bazooka and some cute projectile weapons - the grenade and the mighty mortar. There are explosive weapons that can be used for more sneaky assaults: the landmine and the timed explosive charge. There are also options for paratrooper drops and air raids. But best of all, there are totally comic weapons that add a kick to the proceedings. One is the magnifying glass that rains death on your enemies like the ants they are! Another is the spray can with a lighter - just don't try this at home. Indeed, you've a wide variety of nasty weaponry at your disposal.

Coloured smoke!

The action occurs in your lil' plastic-man homeworld, which looks like the war-torn Korea and in various oversized locations a la Land of the Giants. The more interesting locations for your miniature battles include a domestic kitchen, desktops, the garden and a child's bedroom. You are just as likely to be faced by cockroaches and domestic menaces like cooking rings, as the tanks and bazookas of your





tan opponents. You also have the opportunity to improvise with some items in your local environs. Zippo lighters can come in handy as makeshift explosives.

Dangerous fumes

Control of your troops occurs through Sarge. You can make orders for him, so that the troops do basic things like rally around, stand your ground and attack. Beyond that you can select individual units and control them. There are vehicles for use by your troops as well. You can take the wheel of a jeep, a tank or a PT boat amongst others. These can be used as pure transportation or in combat, as most are mounted with guns.

One of the problems with Army Men 2 can be levelled squarely at the controls. In partic-

ular with the vehicles, but also with the soldiers. Driving a tank lacks that smooth response that you crave. The troops are also a problem as they often get stuck behind trees and lack

the basic ability to come up with an alternate route. While not purely abysmal, the controls in Army Men 2 are not quite as good as those seen in other titles around at the moment.

Smoke inhalation

The single player game of Army Men II is played in a series of missions. These fall into your usual mission-type scenarios, attack this, protect this or flee from that. As you progress, a narrative is played out concerning the whole debacle. A nice touch but probably unnecessary for this type of game. Most stages have a change of orders mid-mission, so what looks like one is actually two distinct missions. The multiplayer game includes all the usual possibilities: Capture the Flag, King of the Hill, Death Match. Army Men 2 has an impressive outfit of gameplay options.

Basic action gaming

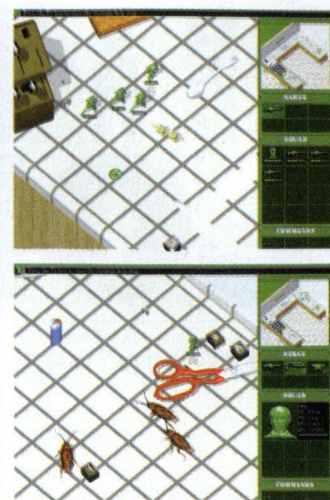
While it's a tried & true formula, this title is going to miss with some gamers. It's a clever idea and generally well executed but it's just a bit dry for the

extended amount of time you'd expect to play it. One problem is that there is no difference between your units. Aside from their varying weapons, it's really just more of the same. Control over your men isn't the greatest. It would be nice to have them a little more intuitive - so that they ran around obstacles, instead of needing to be lead everywhere. The interface makes it look like a strategy game but don't be confused. There is basically no strategy elements to this warfare, aside from having your men in the right place at the right time. This isn't really a fault as Army Men 2 is basically just a pure action game.

CO poisoning

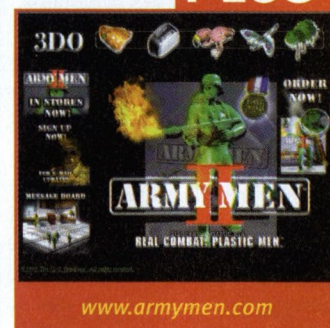
To that end, Army Men 2 is a whole lotta fun. Running around melting and burning your opponents is great for an hour or two, especially with the cute weapons like the magnifying glass or the air raid! But it can get a little dull after you get over this title's basic premise. Fairly solid gaming here but you'd definitely need a keen interest for Army Men 2 to last on your hard drive. This is a simple game geared more for the younger gamer.

John Dewhurst



Roaches and computer games. Always a winning combination.

PLUS⁺



www.armymen.com

79%

Category	Action
Players	1 - 4 (TCP/IP, IPX, modem-to-modem)
Publisher	3DO
Price	TBA
Rating	G8+
Available	TBA

For Pure action gaming, cute concept that is nicely executed, loads of great weapons. For the younger gamer.

Against Fairly repetitive gaming. Unit control is a let down. Some will find it too easy.

Need Win95/98, P90, 16MB RAM, 1MB SVGA card

Want P133, 32MB RAM, 2MB SVGA card, DirectX sound card

GRAND THEFT AUTO LONDON '69

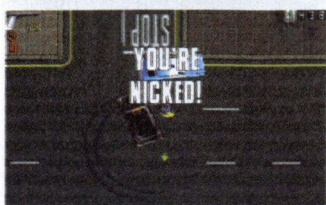
Let the road rage fly with this retro mission pack.

Upon first inspection, Grand Theft Auto looks like a simple top-down view driving game. When you get into it though, it's a complete simulation of the action-adventures of a mobile criminal. You drive getaway cars, steal Porsches, deliver drugs, collect protection money and rub out enemies of da boss. All while avoiding death and incarceration.

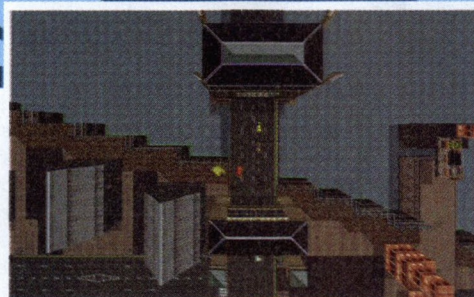
In an average game of GTA you will steal about thirty cars, survive numerous car chases, earn \$800,000 or so and shoot at least three police officers with machine guns. It's a very violent, bad-influence-on-the-criminally-insane kind of game, that almost didn't make classification. And it's great fun!

Rollin', in my 5.0

The best part about it was the way it was completely freeform.

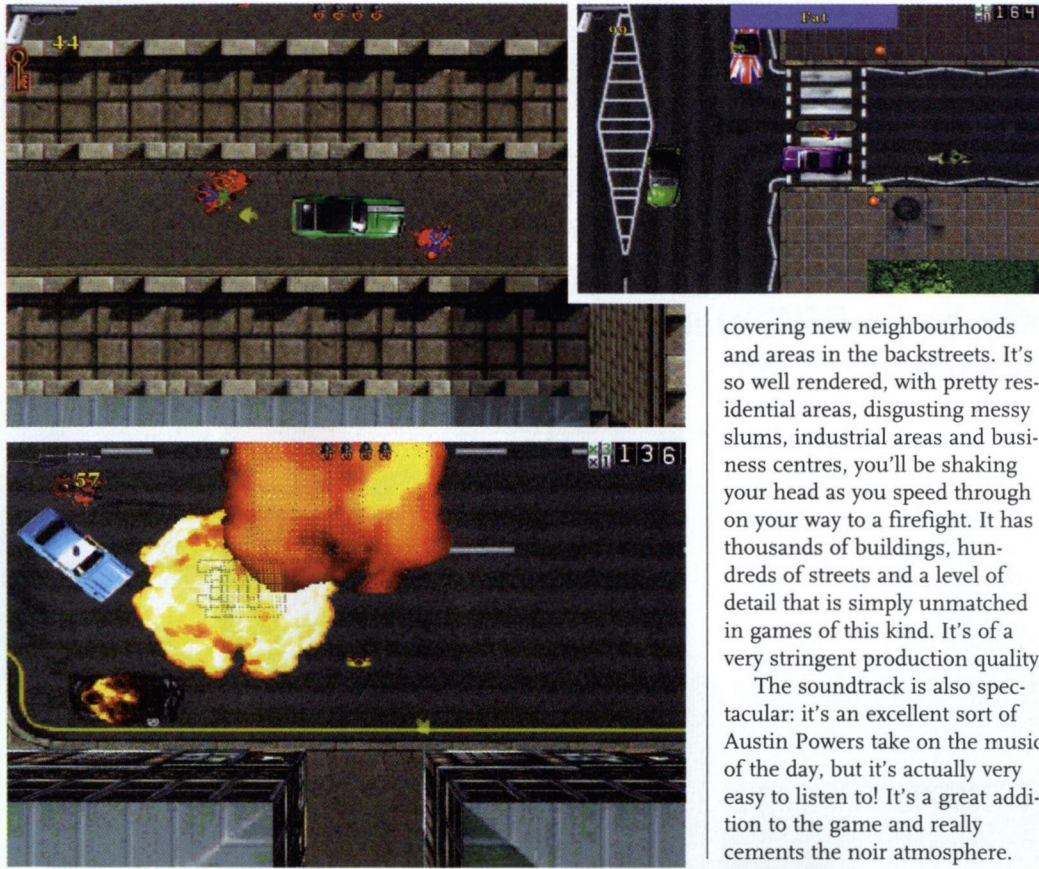


(left) "Kill Frenzy!" Hey, they never told us Carnaby Street was like this?! Look out for the vicious Vespa and Lambretta gangs...



Set in a massive metropolis in the US, you can take off-road shortcuts through backstreets, carparks, cemeteries, shopping malls and playgrounds on your way to the ever-urgent destination. It also never plays the same way twice thanks to slick rou-

tines that randomly incorporate traffic and police density. It has over thirty distinct vehicles to choose from, each with custom radio music that plays when you drive them. It's an overwhelmingly detailed game, sensibly founded on solid gameplay.



covering new neighbourhoods and areas in the backstreets. It's so well rendered, with pretty residential areas, disgusting messy slums, industrial areas and business centres, you'll be shaking your head as you speed through on your way to a fire. It has thousands of buildings, hundreds of streets and a level of detail that is simply unmatched in games of this kind. It's of a very stringent production quality.

The soundtrack is also spectacular: it's an excellent sort of Austin Powers take on the music of the day, but it's actually very easy to listen to! It's a great addition to the game and really cements the noir atmosphere.



Improved gameplay

Gameplay wise the game is quite similar to the original, which is a good thing. Minor enhancements to the driving and collision physics have just made it all the more enjoyable. The mis-

sions are also a lot more forgiving, which is a relief as the first game was ultra-difficult all the way through. The missions have been made easier and a bit more newbie-friendly, too. Things you need to find in a rush, like the car respray shops and bomb-fitting garages being brightly indicated in your view is nice, and weapons and tools you need to do the jobs are much more generously distributed.

Linguistically challenged

Your superiors give you orders over the CB in very colloquial Cockney Rhyming Slang. Some of that is common to Australian slang, but only a tiny bit. It helps to have a few English friends you can quiz on the meaning of things! It would seem that this package has mostly catered for the big, established Grand Theft Auto fan base in the UK.

Drenched in detail

The map is a faithful, massive rendition of the streets of old London. All the famous landmarks are there, the river Thames flows through the middle of everything and its size and detail are simultaneously staggering. You're constantly dis-

covering new neighbourhoods and areas in the backstreets. It's so well rendered, with pretty residential areas, disgusting messy slums, industrial areas and business centres, you'll be shaking your head as you speed through on your way to a fire. It has thousands of buildings, hundreds of streets and a level of detail that is simply unmatched in games of this kind. It's of a very stringent production quality.

Smoother and funkier

It's overall a smoother, funkier experience than the original. With excellent 60's music. The intense new map and missions are a delight to play, too. Top fun.

Ed Dawson



Where's Emma Peel?

GTA London: 1969 is a mission pack for the above-mentioned game, transporting it from the modern mean streets of the US to an English criminal landscape set in the funky sixties heyday.

Weird three-wheeled things

Naturally it's filled with a full new complement of cars, from James Bond specials to Minis, double-decker buses to those weird three-wheeled things.

While you're on foot, you can

If you squint hard enough you might catch a glimpse of David Hemmings and Vanessa Redgrave... Or maybe not.

PLUS⁺

GRAND THEFT AUTO

Don't mess sunshine. Or I'll kick yer bloody head in. Understood ponce?

www.take2games.com/modules/gtalondon/public/intro/index.html

75%

Category Carjacking/crime spree action game
Players 1-4 via IPX network
Publisher Take2 interactive
Price \$TBA
Rating Rating: MA15+
Available Now

For Classy revision of a very unique, freeform game. Thick atmosphere something like Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels combined with Pulp Fiction.

Against It requires the original game to operate, which is now more than two year old, and difficult to track down! This major hurdle will prevent many people from playing it. It's a greedy and unrealistic way to sell games.

Need Full version of original Grand Theft Auto, 486 DX4/100 or better processor, 16 MB RAM, 1 MB VESA compatible graphics card, DOS 6.0 (or higher) or Win95/98, 80 MB disk space

Want Pentium 90, 32 MB RAM, 3Dfx accelerator card.

3D SUPPORT
3dfx

LANDS OF LORE 3

Of lore? What lore? Don't be fooled. This one's an action game with very basic RPG elements. And there's bugger all lore too.

Lands Of Lore 2 succeeded for me at least partly because of its novel plot device. By that I mean the way Luther's curse meant he would morph between human, lizard, and ogre form at the most unexpected moments. Not only did it create situations that required quick thinking and the opportunity for multiple courses of action, but it was also just enough of an annoyance to urge the player to find a cure as soon as possible.

Hardly convincing

In comparison, the set-up in Lands Of Lore 3, although initially promising, seems weak and never as interesting as you expect it could be. Our hero, Copper LeGre, has his soul stolen in the opening cutscene and spends the duration of the game searching for it. Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but losing your soul should represent quite a major event in anyone's life. You wouldn't know it playing this game though. Copper may as well be searching for a pair of socks he lost down the launderette for all the difference it would make to the story. Indeed, if they were his lucky socks then it might even be more interesting.

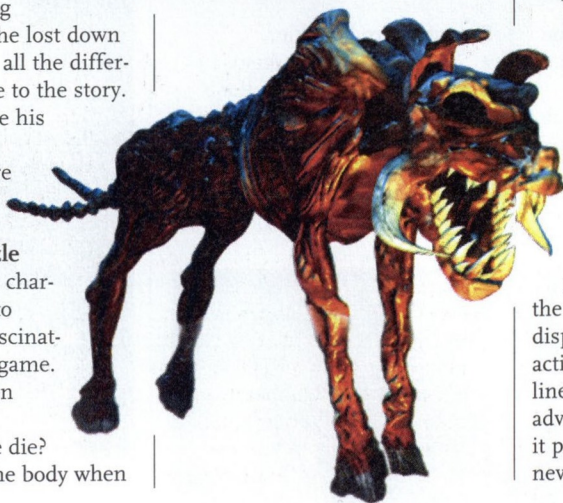
The Mystical Fozzie

A soulless main character surely ought to raise all kinds of fascinating dilemmas in a game. What happens when Copper dies? Or, indeed, how can he die? What happens to the body when

it is separated from the spirit, and vice versa? Or, indeed, are the body and spirit distinct entities? The possibilities are endless, yet Westwood haven't bothered to even consider them. Instead, Copper is just another fantasy hero on a quest for the mystical fozzie or whatever and it's game over when he runs out of hit points. Yawn.



Here we see the bustling village of... Hang on, bustling?! There's no one there!



A few steps back

Thus, with a bland main character, a less than compelling main quest, and a frankly boring world to explore, it's not exactly surprising that LOL3 struggles to offer much in the way of exciting gameplay. Yet, exciting gameplay is exactly what its prequel possessed. LOL2 managed the impressive feat of balancing disparate role-playing and action elements throughout a linear plotline worthy of an adventure game. In this regard it paralleled, though admittedly never equalled, the great Ultima



Underworld. On the other hand, LOL3 reminds me of nothing so much as Strife - a mediocre, story-driven, first-person shooter from a few years back. What we have here is not a bad game, but one that is painfully average.

Uninspiring world design

Most obviously, there's the crushingly dull and awfully clichéd world design. Inspiration on the part of the developers seems to have extended no further than creating an ice world here, a fire world there, etc, until they had exhausted all possible

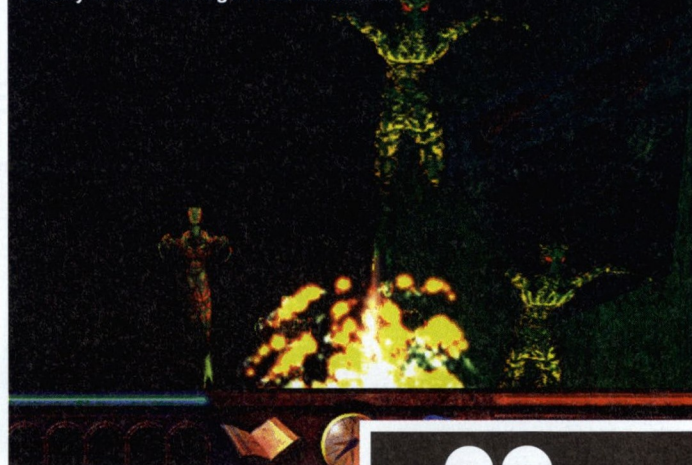
elements. Remember how platform games used to be designed? That's what LOL3 feels like. Long corridors paradoxically full of very little is the recurring motif. It doesn't matter whether you're walking through caves, towns or woods - it's all the same, but in different colours. Occasionally, there'll be a puzzle to solve or several monsters to fight, but mostly it's just one long trudge from start to finish and back again.

A pseudo RPG

In fact, the design feels far more like a collection of levels rather than a cohesive world,



Copper lobbs a few spells at some foul beasts. He may as well be using a rocket launcher...



betraying the game's underlying action game leanings. Westwood have tried to suppress such leanings, hastily arranging some scant role-playing trappings in a lacklustre attempt to disguise the game's fundamental basis. Believe me, this is not an RPG - Lands of Lore 3 is an action game. Perhaps in one of my more

generous moments, I might call it an action/RPG, as I have done in that summary box to the right, but action undoubtedly dominates.

Basic action gaming

Now, there's nothing wrong with action games, of course. But there's plenty wrong with poor action games. Combat here typically involves running backwards, strafing from side to side (with circle strafing as an alternative for the more advanced player and utterly necessary in cramped locations), lobbing

either spells or ranged weapons at the enemy until it dies or runs away. Tactics and strategy, once the backbone of any decent RPG combat system, are here unmistakably absent.

Semi-redeeming

In its favour, the guild concept is a sound one, and its implementation here - making you choose in-game, as opposed to pre-game, which guild to belong to - is excellent. Likewise, having familiars joining Copper on his quest is a nice idea, and a thoughtful substitute for a party of characters, but there's still potential here that remains unfulfilled throughout the game. Situations that require you to take control of your familiar or even simultaneously coordinate it with Copper could only have produced beneficial effects. Such missed opportunities are indicative of the lack of ambition Westwood have shown in the design.

Lost the plot

In striving to make amends for the perceived failings of Lands of Lore 2, Westwood have gone too far the other way. The excesses of the admittedly overcooked, yet still under-appreciated, earlier game have been replaced by a stripped back, bare essentials approach. Lands of Lore 3 may have been developed in eighteen months, as opposed to the four years for LOL2, but as a result it feels half-hearted and rushed. And, ultimately, that's not going to satisfy anyone.

David Wildgoose

60%

Category Action/RPG
Players 1
Publisher Westwood
Price TBA
Rating MA
Available Now

For Guilds and familiars are neat ideas, but still peripheral. When the core gameplay fails, they're hardly enough to save it. The visuals are prettier than LOL2.

Against The lightweight role-playing won't please RPG fans, nor will the lame action entice FPS gamers. Cliched and tired level design stifles any atmosphere, while the lazy plotting never scales the requisite heights. Depressingly average.

Need P166, 32MB RAM, 4xCD, 450MB HD

Want P200, 64MB RAM, 1GB HD, 3D card

3D SUPPORT

Native Voodoo, Voodoo2, Direct3D

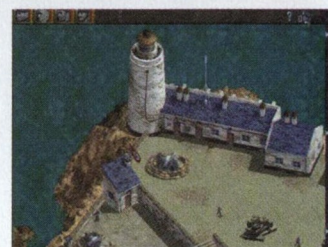


COMMANDOS BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

Lester and Harold did all for queen and country. Just don't ask them how they kept warm on those freezing, European, winter nights on the front.

Most gamers will have fond memories of *Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines*. It successfully combined positive aspects of both the Squad-Based Combat and Real Time Strategy genres into a unique sub-genre. In spite of some extremely frustrating

Beyond the Call of Duty (CBTCOD) places the player in command of an elite band of special forces personnel. Consisting of a Commando, Spy, Diver, Sapper, Sniper, Driver and



flaws, its innovative gameplay and impressive graphics made it an instant hit. *Commandos: Beyond the Call of Duty* is not an add-on pack in the conventional sense, nor could it be classified as a sequel. As ownership of the original game is not necessary, the game is better described as a stand-alone/add-on hybrid.

Elite personnel

Set in the later stages of World War II, *Commandos:*

numerous partisan contacts, the team represents the last vestige of hope for the Allies. With the exception of the partisan forces, the team remains identical to that from the original *Commandos*. Each team member specialises in a particular aspect of warfare or infiltration. The vocations of the team members make many of these specialties rather obvious, but others require elaboration. The Sapper, for instance, specialises in demolitions and ensnarement; regularly wreaking havoc with his radio-detonated bundles of dynamite. He also bears traps modified for use against humans! (Ha Ha! - Ed)



Combat with etiquette

Each character has now been awarded additional abilities which complement their existing ones. Rather than being limited to simply despatching enemies, they are now able to subdue them then leave them bound and gagged in a darkened corner. All characters now also have the ability to use captured enemy guards to their advantage. By keeping them within firing range, the characters can order the captured guards to distract their buddies with girly magazines and idle chatter. This leaves the distracted soldiers open to attack from behind. It's also possible to throw stones and packets of cigarettes

"Ein kelester! Alarm! Alarm!" Really, Brett, it's just not that funny...

to distract guards that are alert to the approach of hostiles. Several new weapons like a shotgun and a single-shot long range Sniper Rifle have been introduced, though the inherent disadvantages of these weapons restricts their use to only a few occasions.

Larger maps!

In total the game offers eight new missions. Mission objectives include kidnapping a German Officer, destroying an enormous train mounted artillery gun, rescuing captured informants and sabotaging prototype aircraft. These occur in diverse surroundings like zoos, airbases and cities. The geographical mission locations are equally diverse and



The mission ended prematurely at the ski-lift because no one possessed the 'cable-car operator' skill...



include the Channel Islands, Bonn, Belgrade, Holland and the Island of Crete. Mission maps are also substantially larger; many more than twice the size of maps offered in *Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines*. While eight missions may seem rather paltry, the missions themselves are difficult in the extreme. Even the very first mission will take *Commandos* veterans several hours and many attempts to complete. Despite its propensity for causing unprecedented levels of frustration, the game instills in the player a grim determination to complete each and every mission.

Keine bon-bons

In-game visuals have been improved markedly, but unfortunately the developers neglected

to include new speech for both the Nazis and Allied soldiers. As such, the player is forced to endure the annoyingly repetitive dialogue that plagued players of the original game. There is, however, one positive aspect of the familiar audio. The unmistakable yell of "Ein keleston! Alarm! Alarm!" as a panicky Nazi guard discovers the body of a compatriot, will never fail to illicit a grin and multiple reenactments from the player and any bystanders.

its predecessor. The interface remains the same, which is desirable in that *Commandos* veterans will be instantly familiar with it. Unfortunately, the old problem of simultaneously coordinating the actions of multiple characters still makes successfully completing missions much more difficult than it should be. Some requirements for completing missions are also not obvious from the outset. Anyone who doesn't possess the foresight to save 2 sniper bullets for the end of the first mission is faced with a reloading of an old saved game at best, and a complete mission restart at worst. Other features (read limitations), like single team members being inflexible in their abilities, are completely illogical. Suspending realism in the interests of gameplay balancing is all well and good, but the fact that the Driver is the only team member capable of operating German vehicles and gun emplacements is patently ridiculous.

Heavy mettle

While the developers should have obviously addressed some of the negative aspects mentioned above, *CBTCOD* is enjoyable nonetheless. The extreme difficulty of the missions will appeal to those who relish a true test of their mettle, and the classic *Commandos* gameplay will tide over those awaiting the impending release of a multitude of squad-based combat titles.

Brett Robinson

Fastidious gameplay

In spite of some obvious improvements to the existing *Commandos* formula, *CBTCOD* still retains many of the gameplay quirks that marred



PLUS⁺



<http://users.aol.com/armysoft/SpecialForces.html>
A comprehensive outline of the US Army Special Forces. Also contains a History section detailing unit action in WWII.

83%

Category Squad-Based RTS
Players 1-4
Publisher Eidos Interactive
Price \$49.95
Rating M
Available Now

For Challenging gameplay, improved visuals, excellent long term value. And, of course, the infinite entertainment potential in that simple phrase: "Ein keleston! Alarm! Alarm!"

Against Infuriatingly difficult at times. Definitely not for those with a short attention span and an even shorter temper.

Need P133, 32MB RAM, 4X CDROM

Want P300, 64MB RAM, 10X CDROM

UEFA

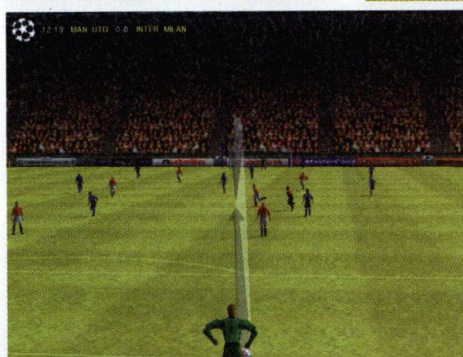
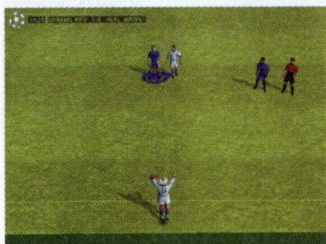
CHAMPIONS LEAGUE SEASON 1998/99

More than a bugger of a title to get your lips around, this soccer sim shoots and... rebounds off the post!

At first glance UEFA Champions League Season 1998/99 seems like an entirely new addition into the glorious world of soccer simulations. It's arrived on the scene with little fanfare and bravado - which is highly peculiar for a game with lots to prove in an already established arena of well-known and highly regarded hooliganism titles. And there's absolutely no mention of the fact that it may indeed have some roots in this established genre. None at all. Hmm...

WLS 3?

What a puzzling state of affairs. For UEFA Champions League is from Silicon Dreams - the very same people that developed World League Soccer 98 just over a year ago, and the more recent Michael Owen's World League Soccer '99. While both were quite similar, both were also fantastic in their own little ways - rather than toying around with official player names, teams, and stadiums (read: they had no licenses), they used the pleasant demeanour of Michael Owen (within the bounds of motion capture) and solid gameplay essentials to elevate themselves from the pack. Hardly anything spectacular in single player, these titles were more fun played with a bunch of highly-intoxicated mates than teaching your pet monkey the fine art of far-east asian cookery. So like any soccer sim fan would, we



A rare occasion when the goalkeeper has full control of the ball, rather than getting stuck on the edge of the post or behind the net.



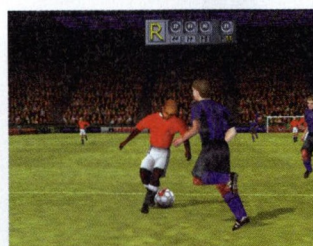
started asking the important questions. "Where's the next lager coming from?", then, "Is it any good, mate?".

Completely adequate

The answer to that question depends on what you look for in a soccer sim. CL is a fantastic soccer bash played against a person of similar skill, especially (and perhaps preferably) on (shhh) something that can be connected to a TV, which

also happens to do away with the cumbersome keyboard interface (er, gamepad anyone?). But for the single player game, CL trips itself up with its own two feet. There's nothing glaringly wrong

with the design or presentation of UEFA Champions League. It's got all the important bits that a soccer simulation needs - like a stack of teams to choose from, customizable weather, player and





A couple o' Poms

UEFA features real time commentary from none other than THE official UEFA Champions League commentators; Bob Wilson, Brian Moore and Ron Atkinson. Now, it's moments like these that has me wanting to embrace my CD-ROM drive with an unhealthy (and almost illegal) dose of affection. Hearing a rather roguish accent crescendo as someone of the likes of Ronaldo heads one into goal does wonders for the system. The quality of the commentary permeating the action as the match unfolds is truly outstanding. Couple this with some delectable visuals, and you've got yourself a beautifully presented football game. The only area that could really do with some attention is the player animation. The peculiar 15 degree slant that players run out looks a little over-done and unnatural. Still, this aspect should only shite the most anal of soccer players out there.



Real teams, real players and best of all real commentators add some sparkle to an otherwise mediocre game

pitch conditions, multiple viewing angles and a whole host of other options to choose from.

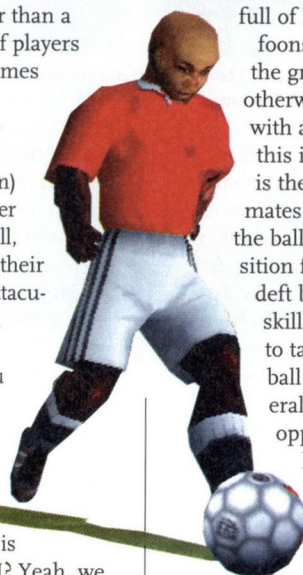
It's just that the most important gameplay aspects of the game fall short of the spectacular. When it's just you and the computer (let's face it, we can't always call upon a boob to play against), there's nothing more off-putting in a simulated game

then walk out of bounds granting you a corner. Or the goalie that failed to stop a ball dribble into goal because he was behind the net. What's the fork is going on with the AI? Yeah, we all have bad days but it's like the game suggests that the UEFA is



of soccer than a bunch of players (with names such as Ronaldo and Beckham) that hover near a ball, consider their next spectacular move,

full of blithering buffoons (Batman!), not the graceful athletes otherwise associated with an organisation of this ilk. Less amusing is the way your teammates behave around the ball. Where the opposition frequently displays deft ball-handling skills, yours struggle to take control of the ball when in the general vicinity. The opposition is naturally at an advantage due to this, and as a result, whup your arse.



PLUS+



If you guys are lucky enough to live near Sydney and clever enough to subscribe to this mag, there should still be some time to catch the great match-up between the Socceroos and the FIFA World XI on June 12 at Olympic stadium. It's going to be HUGE! Ph 9266 4800 for more details.

Dirty tactics

It's a bit like this. All your teammates are in the right position, they're all open, and they've passed you a sinker. But for no apparent reason, just meters from the goal post, you whip out a clenched fist and belt yourself one in the groin. Your teammates are naturally confused by your actions, but are totally flabbergasted when the ref saunters up beside you and hands you a red card. UEFA CL has got it where it counts, though will mystify you with a collection of some completely inappropriate examples of AI.

March Stepnik

71%

Category Sports
Players 1-2 (same computer)
Publisher Eidos/Silicon Dreams
Price \$TBA
Rating G
Available Now

For Pleasant graphics and great quality streaming commentary result in a fun multiplayer experience.

Against Predictably average AI. A game based on a world class soccer competition, minus the class.

Need P166, 16Mb RAM, 4xCD.

Want PII300, 64MB RAM, Voodoo II.

3D SUPPORT
D3D

Keyboard vs Joystick vs Joypad

The controls of CL cover most conceivable moves and situations. If a ball's heading in your general direction, you can head it or bicycle kick it off to another direction. Wanna test the ref and offend the opposition? Try a more aggressive tackle. In fact, there are over fourteen moves at your disposal, executed by pressing eight different keys. And yes, this range gets might confusing when played on the keyboard. Forget playing this on a joystick too. To play this game the way it was meant to be played, you'll need an 8-button joypad. It's the only way. Without one of these, you're battling the controls as well as the opposition.

Battle of Britain

An in-depth wargame with a messy interface

“Using all possible means, the German air forces will smash the British air forces in as brief a period of time as possible. Its attacks will be directed in the first instance against formations in flight, their ground facilities, and their supply centres, then against the British aircraft industry, including factories producing anti-aircraft guns.”

Adolf Hitler, Fuhrer Directive No. 17, August 1, 1940

Infamous campaigns

TalonSoft's latest turn-based wargame attempts to recreate the epic struggle between Germany and Britain in the summer of 1941 when Adolf Hitler launched the might of the Luftwaffe against a poorly prepared England.

Few options

Fire up the game and the choices are few. New German Campaign, New English Campaign, Multiplayer, and a rather scant Options selection. Once you select the side you are playing for, you have a variety of choices as to mission type. These range from a one day mission (1 turn), a week mission (7 turns) to a full campaign of 79 turns. There are no Allied bombing campaigns, however the imagination could be tweaked by the “what-if” 1941 campaign that portrays a scenario of the Luftwaffe once again attempting to bring England to its knees

Strategic warfare

If you select the German side, you have a challenge on your hands; you are on the offensive. You choose targets, planning raids, and update reconnaissance information. The German side really steers the game by launching up to 100 raids per day, at up to 300 targetable objects in England. Targets include industry, RAF airfields, radar stations, or even widespread attacks



You dissolve into the tactical level, and distinguishing a particular fighter or bomber staffel becomes very difficult!

against urban areas. This is strategic warfare, and if you recall my Total Air War review in Issue 31, you will remember that these actions are targeting an enemy's centre of gravity. In other words, something from which a nation derives the strength or the will to fight. Good stuff, this is the way to fight a war between nations.

War of attrition

Lock in your orders and off go your aircraft. Then you sit back and watch the screen as either your human or AI opponent plays the defensive or English actions by transferring squadrons and anti-aircraft guns around England, deploying barrage balloons near likely enemy targets, setting up fighter patrol areas and so on. While he is doing this, the German initial turn becomes visible to him, and he reacts by intercepting any German aircraft within range of the intended targets. In the longer campaigns the English player has to rotate fatigued and battle-worn

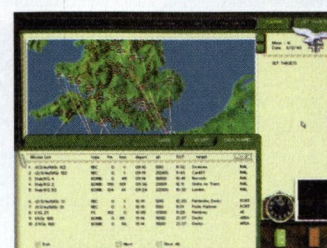
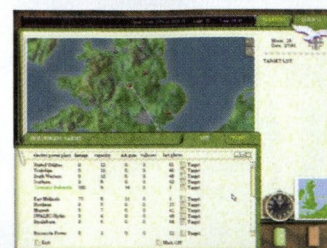
squadrons to rear areas where they can rest and replenish. Then you start over again and go on and on and on.

Not Hogan's Heroes

I was impressed by the amount of accurate wartime information within the game, ie English and German squadrons, airfields, industrial areas etc. In fact I got a bit of a kick out of targeting my wife's home town of Swansea in Wales! Unfortunately, while the game is set in one dimension at the strategic level, you really do get down to fighting at the tactical level at the same time, and this is poorly presented on a look-down “big blip for each flight” interface. Everything becomes so cluttered that you have to zoom in. Then you lose the overall strategic picture. On top of this the game tries to show each flight dropping its bombs and the whole screen jerks about as you get a pathetic flash of bomb burst and some FMV.

Not my cup of tea.

Maj Ian Lindgren



Up to 100 raids per day can be planned in detail, by squadron (or Staffel) and by mission type. Good work and very detailed information

PLUS+

The Royal Air Force

I recommend a visit to http://www.raf.mod.uk/on_display/bbmf.html to read all about the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and more.

62%

Category	Strategy
Players	1-2 by Internet (TCP/IP)
Publisher	Talonsoft
Price	\$89.95
Rating	G
Available	Now
For	Good concept and a detailed order of battle
Against	Poor graphics and interface
Need	P133 with 32 MB RAM
Want	P233 with 64 MB RAM
3D SUPPORT	D3D

Pro18 World Tour Golf

Psygnosis take golf to dizzying new heights of incomprehensibility.

You know how all serious driving sims have set-up screens where you are confronted by wall-to-wall statistics, graphs, dials and gauges. These frightening places allow you to adjust every facet of your car's performance, from the suspension to gear ratios via a million smaller yet more complex aspects. Well, Pro 18 World Tour Golf reminded me of that.

Lotsa detail

With their new golf sim, Psygnosis have managed to capture that same sensation of inadequacy - the inescapable feeling of being overwhelmed - one experiences when faced with driving sims of the daunting calibre of Grand Prix Legends and its ilk. Let me run through some of the more obviously fastidious details Pro 18 can boast from its fantastically extensive repertoire. The wind indicator measures not only the velocity and direction, but its effects at different heights. Thus, the breeze may be fairly constant at ground level, but swirling around with gusto at the treetops. Altering your golfer's stance is a consideration as well, if you wish to take into account the effects of "fade" and "draw". (Note: if you don't understand what "fade" or "draw" mean, then this sim definitely isn't for you). Various swing types are available to further exploit the deep, casually-attired mysteries of this most tartan of games. You can even decide whether to hit the ball with an open or closed face. Club face, that is.

Too much detail

Primary amongst Pro 18's original features is the 4-Click Pro Swing Meter. Unlike inferior or tri-click systems, the fourth click affects the degree of spin imparted to supposedly bring you total control of each shot. Well, certainly it makes the game more difficult, but I'd

hesitate before saying it made the game more controllable. In theory, the extra segment on the swingometer should allow you to correct (or at least try to correct) any error earlier in the swing. With only a fraction of a second to respond, however, what tends to happen is those errors are simply compounded.

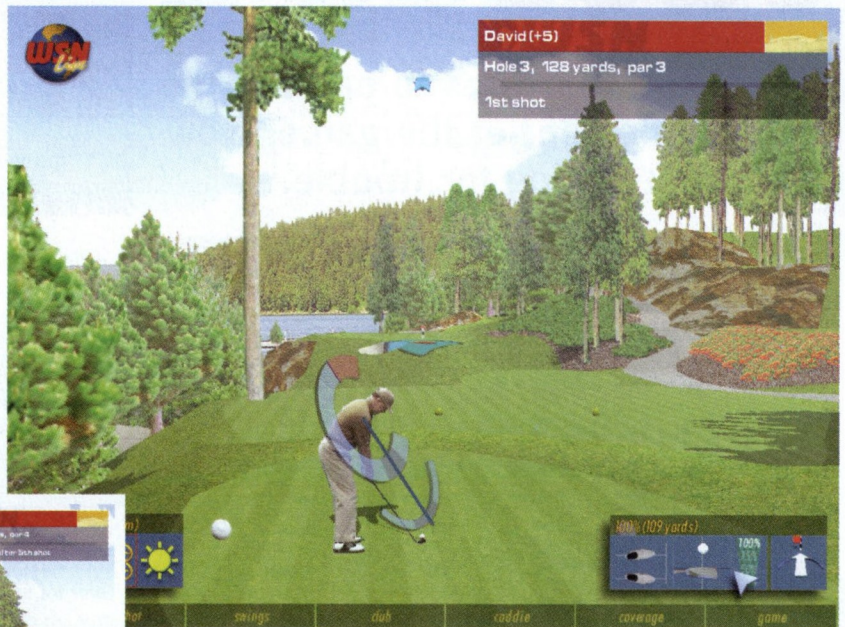


You know what would make golf games more exciting? Snipers in the trees, landmines in the bunkers, crocs in the water traps... It'd be great!

Realistic, for sure - a wobbly, half-hearted backswing could never be nullified no matter how perfectly you strike the ball. But I'd question whether it makes the game any more enjoyable. And that's what we're here for, right?

Enough already!

Another addition to the usual array of golfing options is the power indicator. As part of the aiming mechanism, it helpfully tells you how far the ball is likely to go, depending on the strength of your shot. Aiming is overall rather poorly done though, mainly because you cannot access any view of the hole other than the default. Often this results in you not having any real idea of where the flag is located. There's a basic overhead view, but it's next to useless as it fails to show your position. Worse, the fixed view



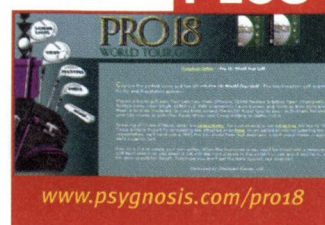
means that the power indicator is regularly hidden behind small hills and even trees - and thus rendered equally useless.

For golfers

In terms of sheer comprehensiveness, there's much to admire about Pro 18. There are features and options here that other golf sims won't have for years to come, but several interface hassles make for some hard work at times. Definitely one for the golfers, rather than gamers.

David Wildgoose

PLUS+



www.psygnosis.com/pro18

69%

Category Golf Sim
Players 1-Multi (Hotseat, Network, Modem)
Publisher Psygnosis
Price \$TBA
Rating G
Available Now

For Amazingly anal - but in a good way, of course. A good, varied selection of courses as well. The 4-Click Swing needs persevering with, but the rewards will come eventually.

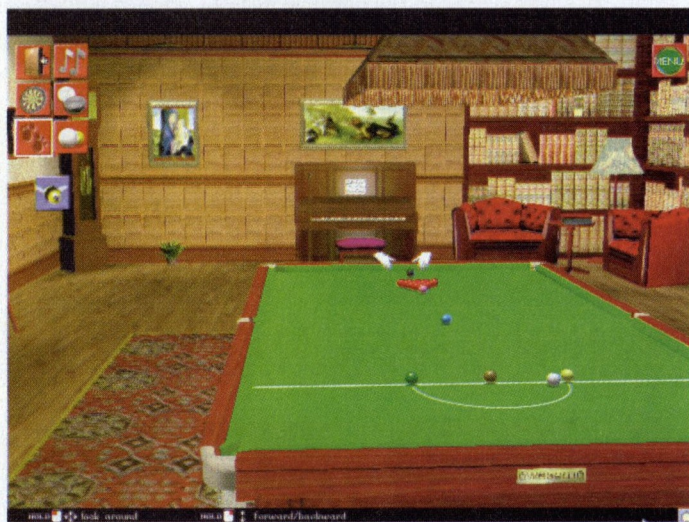
Against The aim indicator disappears all too often, turning many of your shots into mere guesswork. The Mouse Swing is badly implemented compared to others I've seen.

Need P166, 32MB RAM, 8xCD

Want P266, 64MB RAM

Jimmy White's Cueball 2

A pool sim that tries to capture the "social" element of the game. Now that's just asking for trouble.

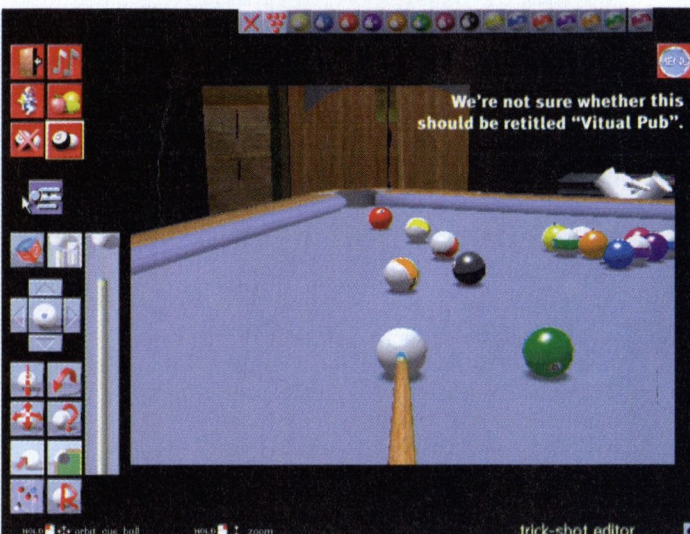


Pool is one of those universal games. A game for the regulars at the local pub but also for the younger kiddies, down at the local bowling alley. Regardless of where you actually play it, there is an ambience about the whole thing - it's not just the table. It's the old pinball machine in the corner that drives you mad with its chirping, the sticky carpet underfoot, the jukebox (or laser juke these days) and the low lights. Would pool be the same game in full sunlight? Surely not. While many pool games go exclusively for the table, Jimmy White's 2 delivers the whole experience of the pool room or snooker parlour with all the trimmings. Welcome your P.C. to the wonderful wonder of pool and the baffling world of snooker.

Identity crisis

Jimmy White's 2 has the player roaming around a three dimensional one-stop cueball centre. The foyer is your high score hall of fame. The two

rooms leading off it are the snooker room and the pool room. Each has a very distinct character. The snooker room is like some old time R.S.L., where you know sneakers won't do. There's a fireplace and artwork on the walls. If it should take your fancy, you can play darts or checkers, in case snooker doesn't grab you (and I wouldn't blame you...). There is a wireless pumping out all the old time greats, that thankfully has an off switch. In stark contrast is the pool room which is like a roadhouse somewhere in the sticks. Your alternatives to pool here are a slot machine and DropZone, an old sit-down arcade machine. There's a rock-'n'-roll soundtrack courtesy of the jukebox that would make anyone head for the bar. To add to the



realism, there is a bar where you can't get any service. But we're here for pool anyway, right?

Quiet, please

The pool action is quite good and the physics of play feel real. You have the option of using your mouse to shoot in that back-and-forth kind of way or you can set the line, power and spin of your shot and click a button to watch the shot take place. There are enough options to keep you happy here, from U.K. 9-ball to U.S. rules. You also have the option to set up trick shots to practise. The snooker play is much the same only on a bigger table. In the single player mode, you play against successive challengers from the hacks to the pros as per usual. There's also the two player mode on one P.C. or over network. The gameplay of Jimmy White's 2 is fairly enjoyable.

Shoddy visuals

Where this game fails is visually - if you don't have a 3D card forget it. For the most part the game looks satisfactory but the visuals can adversely affect play. At times, the shoulder of the pockets are unclear (particularly in software mode) which can be disastrous in certain shots. This kind of thing is fairly inexcusable - you shouldn't have to battle the game design while you play your opponent. I would rather have great visuals and miss out on the various amusements like the

darts and the checkers. The sound in Jimmy White's 2 is about as bad as it gets. It reminds me of games of a decade ago, with the same inane little tunes playing over & over... I turned the sound off VERY early in my Jimmy White 2 experience.

Close...

Jimmy White's 2 Cueball is a fairly solid game if you're looking for a mix of snooker and pool. However, it is hampered by ordinary visuals (if not in hardware accelerated mode) and a really ordinary soundtrack. It's not bad but it's nothing to lose sleep over.

John Dewhurst

67%

Category	Snooker/Pool sim
Players	1 - 2 (one P.C., TCP/IP, IPX)
Publisher	Virgin Interactive
Price	\$TBA
Rating	G8+
Available	Now

For Playable, realistic pool and snooker. Nice idea with the additional amusements.

Against Visuals are fairly poor, lacking in eye-candy. Soundtrack is atrocious!

Need P133, Win95/98, 16MB RAM

Want P200, 32MB RAM, D3D card

3D SUPPORT
D3D & software





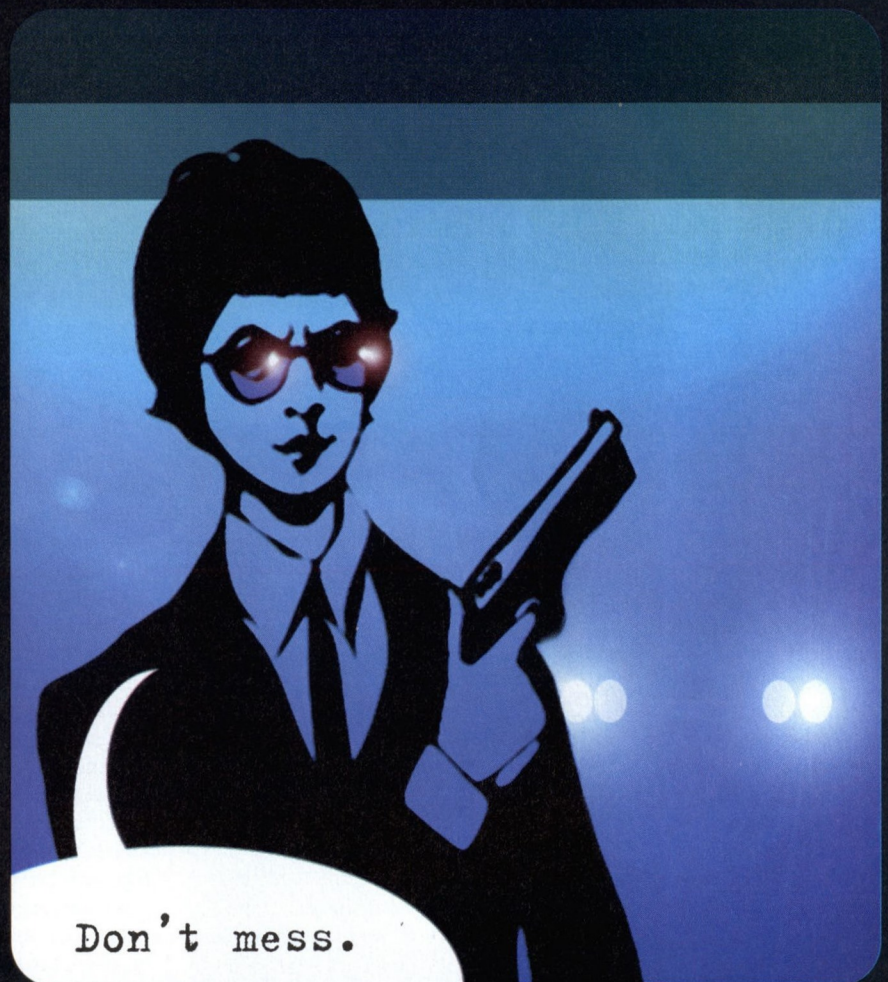
GRAND THEFT AUTO

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Virtual Deep Sea Fishing

Hee-Haw, gaff that darned Marlin, Zed!! Hoohoo, he do put up a dern big fight, don' he! Man! I tell yer, "Dawgs Will Hunt!"

Okay. We've gone skeet shooting, gunned down deers and pigs, shot things with crossbows, stabbed stuff with pitchforks, hacked stuff up with chainsaws and run over critters in big meaty cars. Hell, we've even tried to outrun the cops in a Holden Special Vehicle. All virtually, of course.

Blokey buffoonery

By crikey's, about the only "country blokes dream" activities left to simulate are Boot-Scootin', branding livestock, sheep-shearing and sheep-dipping, Roo Shootin' off the back of a Ute with spotties (much more challenging and adrenaline-charged than mincing about the woods with a poofy duck whistle) the drunken conquests of a traditional B&S Ball and some kind of vandalism involving illegal fireworks.

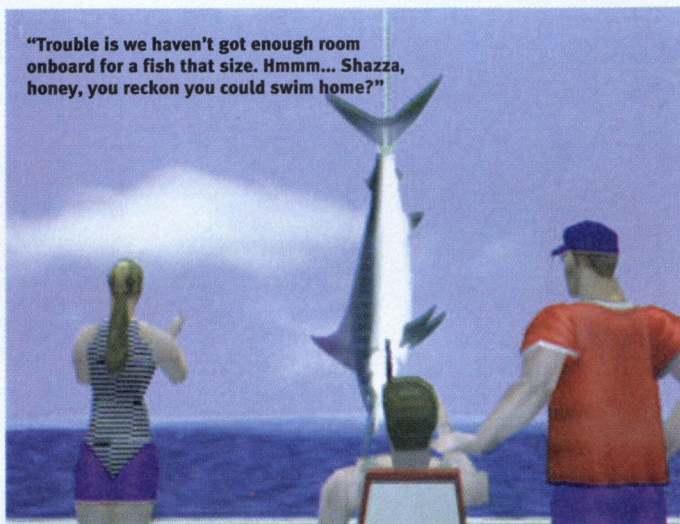
Fun AND logical

Despite the potential these kinds of games have to be extremely boring, Virtual Deep Sea Fishing pulls off this simulation very well. Certainly it is mildly relaxing, having most of the screen displaying 3D waves and sky, with your on-screen Rex Hunt type dude periodically stretching, scratching and reaching for his beer. How well-rooted in reality the principles of the gameplay are remains to be seen, but it is certainly an enjoyable experience, and somewhat logical.

Authentic deep-sea action

As far as I can gather the key to catching a big game fish is throwing a baited line in the water, driving your speedboat at full throttle until you see a fish on your patented Fish

"Trouble is we haven't got enough room onboard for a fish that size. Hmmm... Shazza, honey, you reckon you could swim home?"



Radar(TM) system, then trying to run over the blighter with the boat. The fish will then conveniently get hungry and bite the hook. Now you have to follow a fairly laborious pattern of winding and levering the rod, reversing the boat toward the fish, listening for the straining sounds the line makes and manoeuvring the boat such that you don't run over the line or let the fish swim out beyond field of view. Eventually the fish gets tired, which takes a proportionally

longer time the heavier the fish is. At this point you just wind the little Mc-Fillet on board and stab it through the head with the long pointy thing, oh yeah, it's called a gaff. You then bask in the admiration of your virtual buddies, who step down from the bridge to slap you on the back, and grin at your virtual girlfriend Shazza, who claps and jumps about the place with enthusiasm scaled to the size of the fish. If you land a 3 gram Garfish she barely has the energy to get out of her deckchair. If it's Jaws' big brother, she'll completely lose it, and probably knock herself out doing a backflip over the starboard Esky. Don't forget your softer, compassionate side though: if he's barely grown his fins you can choose to chuck him back in the water with a passionate kiss, and a longing wave as he swims off. At this point you are permitted to get a bit misty in one eye and mutter to yourself: (cue Jack Thompson voice-over) "Cheeky little tackers".

PLUS⁺



No Rex Hunt!

Basically, this one's the best fishing game ever made for the PC, so far. It's guaranteed to be less boring, smelly and disgusting than actually fishing, too.

Ed Dawson

63%

Category Fishing Sim
Players 1-5 (over IPX network, Internet TCP/IP or Serial connection)
Publisher Interplay Sports
Price \$TBA
Rating G
Available Now

For Very intuitive gameplay, decent wave effects and water transparency, cool fish animation, 3-Dimensional beer swiggin' boat-going rednecks.

Against Overly simplistic, essentially bland gameplay, 3-Dimensional beer swiggin' boat-going rednecks.

Need P166 (or P133 with 3D accelerator), 32MB RAM, Win 95/98, DirectX 6, CD-ROM drive

Want P200, 64MB RAM, 3D accelerator, 4xCD-ROM or better

3D SUPPORT

Voodoo 1/2, Riva 128, Permedia 2, Intel i740.

NASCAR

Craftsman Truck Series Racing

They're huge, handle like fridges on ice, and are prone to run into walls. But hot damn! Racing trucks is heck of a lot of fun!

The gaming world has seen the arrival of a number of new and perhaps peculiar sporting titles over the last few years. There are now a number of drag racing, fishing and hunting titles available for the P.C. Some would argue these pastimes aren't particularly suited to P.C. gaming (apart from whether some are in poor taste or not). What's a hunting trip without beer and a campfire? It seems Sierra is making a name for themselves as the publisher of these outdoor sports. NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series Racing is another game in this spirit. The idea is to race high power, finely tuned trucks around a racetrack. I don't mind watching a bit of Formula One racing or rally car driving, but I must confess that I find truck racing a bit of a mystery.

Big race USA

From the outset there are the Quick Race and Championship options. In the Quick Race, you start out by choosing what track you want to race. In Championship you follow the circuit in the Championship season. There are 8 tracks to race around the United States and most fall into the circular category. There's much preparation before each race. Anyone familiar with the drag racing genre, will know that it's all about what goes on in the garage. This is because the race itself is so short. Your perfect car might need this type of chassis and that spoiler with this type of engine. But don't forget the red

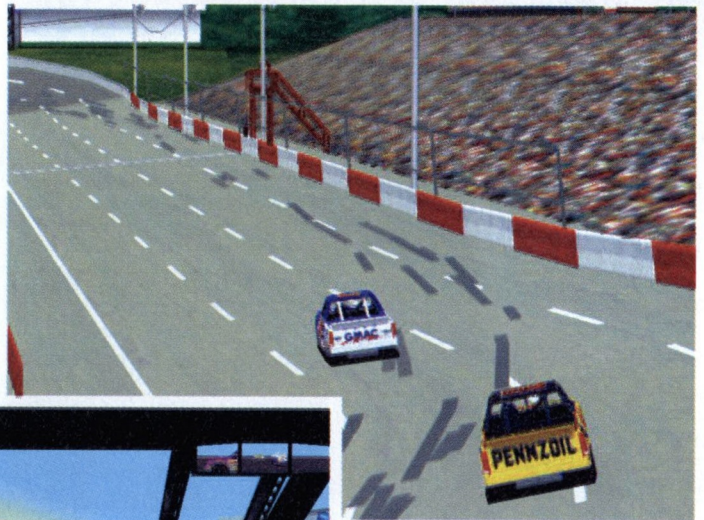
paint job cos' then they go REALLY fast. In NASCAR Truck Racing, you can also go through the long, intricate process of fine tuning your vehicle so that at the green flag, it runs like a dream.

Grease monkeys

There is so much detail in the workshop it's scary. You can adjust the tyres and their camber, the chassis, weight distribution, gear ratios, shock absorbers and others. The idea is that each track is distinctly different and requires a totally new car setup. So you'll take your basic vehicle, make a change to it and do some laps. Depending on how your truck felt and how your test results read, you can make more changes. By trial and error, you should arrive at your perfect vehicle. You'll spend more time on the track testing your setup than in the final race. After you've satisfied your tweaking urges, you can go through the process of qualifying, warming-up and finally racing in your customised truck.

Authentic

The driving sensation is very good. It really feels like you're in a big powerful vehicle that needs very particular handling to control. For the gamer looking for an authentic truck driving experience, this is a good choice. Having said that these are probably the only gamers who would like it. For your arcade racing fan, there really isn't any fun here, since the trucks handle like, well, trucks. They're big & heavy and you really have to watch your speed or you'll just career into every wall. Racing is that much slower since these are big vehicle - it's a little like racing sedans through honey.



From the "turn left four times" school of driving games comes the latest incarnation; "pickup truck" racing. Oh dear.



Special pedigree

NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series Racing is a solid title for fanatical petrolheads. There is enough detail in it to satisfy the interested for many hours. It's a complete package with replay options, championships and all the dials on the dashboard one could ever need. That said, it's not everyone's game. Those who lack the love of the engine need not look at this game at all. But if truck racing is your thing, NASCAR Truck Series is for you.

John Dewhurst

80%

Category Racing Sim
Players 1
Publisher Sierra
Price \$TBA
Rating G
Available Now

For Super detailed truck racing with all the frills.

Against Only for the racing enthusiast.

Need P100, 24MB RAM, Windows compatible sound card

Want P166, 32MB RAM, SVGA card, 3D card

3D SUPPORT
3dfx supported



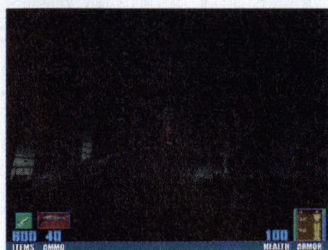
WAGES OF SIN

It "fixes" Sin and gives us lots of new goodies to play with. Shame about the timing.

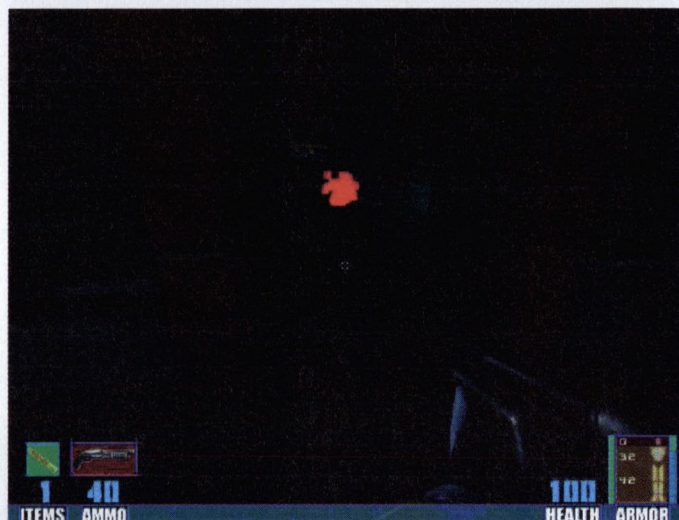
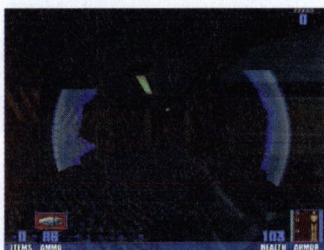
Sin is one of those games which came out just a little bit too late. Sure it's a good game and all but when an 18Mb patch hits the net only a few weeks after release you've gotta start asking questions. And by then most of us were playing Half Life anyway. So now for the obligatory mission pack: Wages of Sin is out. The "Good Book" says the wages of Sin is death, but is this game that bad? No, but it could have been better.

Sin v.1.03

Wages of Sin (WoS) upgrades Sin to version 1.03 and it finally looks like the bugs have just about disappeared. This is all



"It's a... it's a... it's a sin" sang the Pet Shop Boys. But they were probably referring to something quite different



have I seen people model real life locations such as casinos and shipyards with the same feel - it really seems like you're there. The same goes for the new deathmatch levels. Also, objective variety is good - many of the missions have you doing things which vary from the norm. The weapon balance is still reasonable, although in deathmatch I think it's too easy to find a powerful weapon.

Item overkill

Ok, now to the not so good points. Having seventeen weapons in the game is a bit much, and the end result is that their significance tends to suffer a bit. Most of them are quite powerful and the dual magnum idea is great but you'll find that you never seem to run out of ammo because you simply have so many weapons to choose from. Sin is supposed to be loosely based on reality isn't it? How come you as the player aren't dragging around a trailer then for all your assortment of weapons and ammo then?

Multiplayer madness

WoS also features a stack of all new multiplayer modes, with

good and well, but it should have been like this six months ago when Sin originally hit the shelves. The feature set of WoS is very impressive: four new characters, twelve new enemies, two new bosses and seven chunky new weapons. All this sounds great, until you actually play the game.

Chips and casinos

Not that it's bad mind you, but there are certain gripes which I think detract from complete enjoyment of the game. First of all - the good points. Level design is fantastic. Never

New Weapons? Nah, they're just tools

Dual Magnums: Not really a "new" weapon, but the ability to hold two Magnums. This is definitely handy and makes you an actual threat when you have nothing else at your disposal. You can pretend to be in a Western as well! The only question is whether you're going to find a second Magnum before you get a beefier weapon in Deathmatch. Probably not.

Concussion Gun: Totally overrated name for a "push" gun. It's great if your enemy is standing next to a cliff. Practically, it isn't very useful, except defending against missiles. Who wouldn't just jump out of the way though?

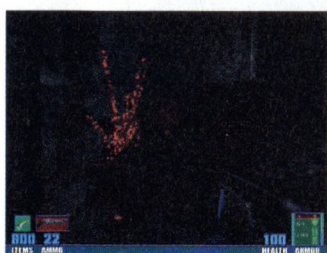
Flame Thrower: Extremely good for indoor levels but forget it outside. It's mainly good for cornering people, switching to "Medium Brown" and letting them have it. It's a bit slow to react so it limits its use to corridor type levels.

Guided Missiles: Do I smell Half-Life? Guided Missiles are much better than Sin's usual rockets, if you find some you'll want to switch to them straight away. Due to the small rocket splash radius they are pretty useful wherever you are. Rocket corridor wars have never been so much fun, especially when you can make them go in different directions.

Plasma Bow: The concept of a Plasma Cross Bow is a convolution of quite a few previously used weapons and produces an interesting result. It's probably most effective at short range and can be most easily compared to Unreal's GES Biorifle (A.K.A. Goop Gun).

Swarm Missiles: Zero Skill Weapon #1. Grabbing this sort of thing will guarantee you some kills if you just let it off in a crowd. This might be good for some people but certainly detracts from fun and fair game-play. Unless of course you're the only one who knows where it is.

Hand Held Nuke: Zero Skill Weapon #2. Quite surprisingly it doesn't shoot a big green blob. Once again it's definitely a fire and forget weapon, you can fire and forget the enemy ever existed, or something like that anyway.



(Right) The Plasma Cross Bow - maybe just a little bit influenced by Chewbacca's weapon of choice?



titles such as "Marked for Death", "Lynch Mob", and "Hoverbike". Marked for Death features an informer and mobsters, basically the mobsters try and kill the informer without getting shot by the "informer gun" so they don't become the informer. Lynch mob is the same except one person is the informer for the whole game.

Hoverbike Deathmatch is entirely different. Basically the Hoverbike is a new vehicle for WoS and they've created four special deathmatch levels to use them on. While this is admirable, not enough work has gone into the physics model and it ends up being a really clunky affair. If we want deathmatch with cars we'll play Interstate 76, not Sin.

"900 Items"???!! You're gonna need a lot more than a trailer to cart that lot, Spoonie

PLUS⁺

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73%

Category 1st person shooter
Players 1 - 32 (TCP/IP)
Publisher Activision
Price \$49.95
Rating MA 15+
Available Now

For Wages of Sin has some nice touches such as new multi-player modes and weapons...

Against ...but it's nothing which hasn't been done before and you can't already get for free. If you loved Sin go for it, you'll enjoy it. If not it's probably best to stay away.

Need Win9x/NT, P166 with 3D. P2 without. 32MB RAM, 2MB Video Card, Full Version of Sin.

Want P2 350, Voodoo2, 64MB RAM

3D SUPPORT

OpenGL, D3D & software

If ya...

Anyway, it's the old line of "If you like this kind of thing then go for it, otherwise don't bother". It's a cliched line because it's true: Wages of Sin is for the Sin fanatic. They'll love it, most people won't.

Rod "Spoonman" Campbell

GALAXY OF TETRIMANIA

Responsible for hundreds of thousands of sick days. Millions of hours at work, lost. Tetris is back in sixty variations. Sixty. There. We warned you.

Developer: Romtech

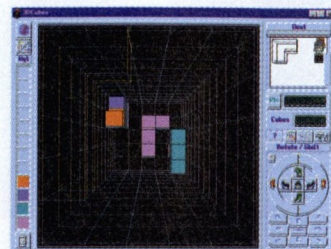
Consider this remarkable statistic for a moment. Inside this aptly titled collection, Galaxy Of Tetrimania, there are more than 60 variations of Tetris. That's sixty. SIXTY. How can there possibly be that many Tetris clones that are different enough to warrant selection in such a compilation? Besides varying colour schemes and visual themes, there is a surprising degree of variety amongst the games on offer here. Partly this is due to the number of Columns clones that have managed to sneak in, presumably when no one was paying attention. There are also several other games that bear little in common with either Tetris or Columns, except for featuring geometric shapes. Which, all told, is probably a good thing. After all, there are only so many falling bricks a sane man can stand.

For reasons I'm still not entirely convinced by, I decided to split the games into three categories - the Good, the Bad and the Ugly - and describe a selection that, at the time, seemed representative of the collection as a whole.. So here we go:

The Good

BeeTris - Tetris with hexagonal shaped bricks. Far more difficult than you might imagine and more enjoyable as well.

Bloxx - A competent Tetris clone. Identical to the original, which immediately elevates it above most of what's on offer here. The trouble with many of these new versions is that they either a) neglect the less is more design philosophy that made the original so compellingly simple in favour of so many extraneous bells and whistles or b) fail to even grasp the basic concepts of Tetris or Columns and consequently leave out vital features



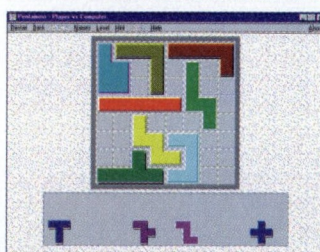
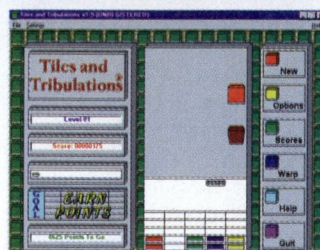
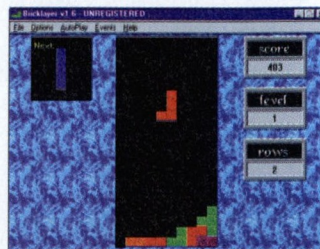
such as an instant drop key (sigh).

Gemstorm - Rather superb little Columns clone with great presentation and sensible controls and design.

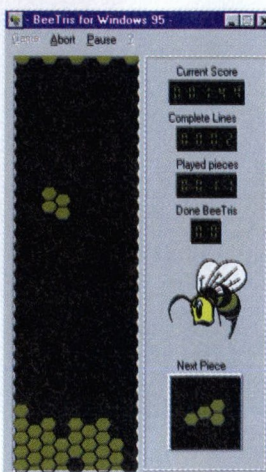
TriTryst - Less a bizarre love triangle than a marble-a-trois, the tongue-twisting TriTryst lacks the frantic pace of most of the games in this collection. Instead it offers a far more thoughtful puzzle game that could prove as addictive as Shanghai. Nicely meditative.

The Bad

3D Cubes - Tetris in a 3D well. Confusing wireframe shapes and disorientating view



More variations than you could possibly EVER want. Including a Berlin wall version (Lower right)



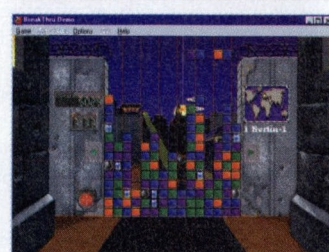
spells bad idea.

Breakthru - Begins with an already full well, leaving you the task of clicking on the rows of three or more bricks you wish to remove. Strangely unfulfilling.

Pentamino - Enthrallingly pointless jigsaw puzzle game for two players. The winner is the last to place a piece on the board. Why is it bad?

Because the damn computer beat me every single time. The bastard. Admittedly, I only played it twice.

Tetrice - Tetris, but stupidly fast. I guess it means experts won't have to sit through the early stages of the game just to reach the breakneck pace of the endgame. But - hey! - why both-



er playing it at all in that case? You can achieve much the same thing by holding the down arrow in any normal game of Tetris. Like, what's the point?

The Ugly

Boxes - Tedious Columns variant that has you clearing a certain number of coloured crates from each screen. Yawn.

Shop Drop - Like Boxes but slightly more complex and slightly more interesting. Guide coloured consumer goods into matching shopping trolleys.

Tiles & Tribulations - An awful name disguises a primitive yet playable version of Klax. You catch tiles then deposit them into rows in order to get matching sets of three. Small play area and irksome graphics limit its appeal.

Mind?

As you can see, there's not merely a real mixture of styles, but of quality as well. If you enjoy the likes of Minesweeper and Freecell, then there's a few games here that give those a run for their money. Bear in mind, however, that you can probably download all of them from the Net for free.

David Wildgoose

TONKA WORKSHOP

Almost makes you wanna be a kid again.

WHAM! BANG! SLAM!
CRIKKA-CRIKKA!
WHAM!

Tonka Joe is hard at work again, I sigh to myself, I just hope that the keyboard survives the rigorous work out it undergoes every time my two year old son starts up The Tonka Workshop.

He can't get enough of this toy and I have to admit that it's pretty addictive - this product has "success" written all over it. Just ask yourself, how can bashing the crap out of a nail be NOT fun?

The Tonka Workshop is a learning experience for young kids, tarted up and masquerading as a computer game. To enhance the fun, it comes with the setup you see here in the photo. The device basically straps on top of your keyboard and when your child (or you) use one of the tools in the toolset, it hits the appropriate

key thus letting the computer program know what's going on. The implementation of this is fantastic with about half of

the activities showing a picture of the toolset as it appears in real life. When you use the tool, the tool on the

screen moves in harmony. In the others, you can see instant visual feedback of what you're doing with the tools. This provides a great opportunity for your kids to learn not just about building and tools but how to interact with computers.

The program itself comes with many different activities. There's the Treehouse that allows you to play games like Tool Tunes and Kill The Termites. Tool Tunes is a spin on the classic "repeat after me" style. Each tool plays a particular note or chord. The idea is you need to use the tools in the same sequence as the computer



to progress. Kill The Termites gives you 30 seconds to kill as many termites using the tools as possible.

The Storage Room allows your child to create artworks from lumps of raw material. Basically bash and use whatever tools they want to and eventually something gets created. Perfect for the really young ones. The Basement is along the same lines, where you start with a plain plank of wood and use whatever tools you want.

The Workshop gives plans to 25 or so projects. Each project has step by step instructions that usually involve using all the tools in one sequence or another. Follow the steps, and voila! A beautiful castle/car/plane/doll is made.

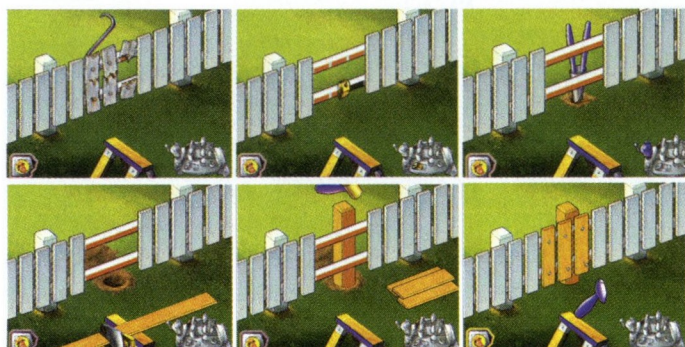
Finally, your child can go out on the road with Tonka Joe himself and help out with some real

life situations like a broken fence, or a hole in a bridge.

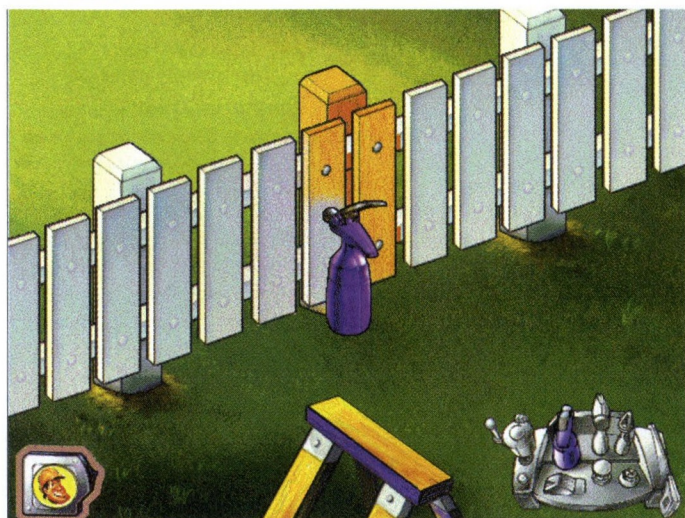
One gripe, minor I know, is that the toolset doesn't always fit exactly right. On some keyboards the saw doesn't quite sit right and you may need to fiddle a little to get it right. All the other tools work fine on standard keyboards, but those people with unusual shaped keyboards like the ergonomic designs need to note that the toolset will just not work. Sure, the keys are pretty easy to map out with a bit of trial and error, but what's the point of not using the tools?

Overall, I cannot recommend this program enough to parents with younger kids - say, aged between 2 and 6. The games are simple, and the interface is perfect - I don't think Hasbro and Tonka can go wrong.

Andrew Parsons



A typical project. Here, we have to mend a broken fence before the cows escape.



the Falcon 4.0 phenomenon

SETUP ■ COMBAT TIPS ■ OPTIMISE YOUR PC ■ MULTIPLAYER HELP

The Major takes us through the basic tactics needed to avoid SAMs and AAA.

"There is no place for sportsmanship or chivalry in air combat, the aim is to do maximum damage while exposing oneself to minimum risk."

An appropriate maxim for all F4 pilots, be they green or veteran - no matter how skilled you are, there is no second chance. Give the other guy an inch and he'll take a mile, and you'll be a memory. Combined with skill, luck is an immeasurable yet finite ingredient in combat: sooner or later you will run out of it. Like most things in F4, luck is modelled on real life and is well done. Therefore, to be successful in F4 there is one pre-eminent element - mission planning. Know the task, know your resources, know the enemy, and plan the mission to achieve the objective and minimise risk, inbound and on egress. Take these steps and "Lady Luck" will stay with you just that little bit longer.

Mission Planning - Know the Enemy

The Tactical Reference gives you some good stats on all the primary objects in the game and you should take the time to read it. It does however fail to give you any detail on the things that really do impede free flight (other than enemy fighters); Surface to Air Missiles (SAMS), Anti Aircraft Artillery (AAA), Radar Installations, and Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) ground force units.

Zip on down to the local library, or find a military web site and generate a spreadsheet like the one I have used at Figure 1. Here I show all the information you need to know about the SAMs (or as we call them in the Australian Defence Force, Ground Based Air Defence or GBAD). Notice that not only do I list the range and effective altitudes of each weapon, but also which ground forces hold them. For example all enemy units down to squads and individual vehicles usually have man-portable SA7s or SA13s. Learn each weapon's symbol on the Radar Warning Receiver (RWR) because there is no use tak-

One flash and you're ash! No matter what side you are on, your luck will run out one day, just make sure it's enemy aircraft like this SU27 that take it up the six.

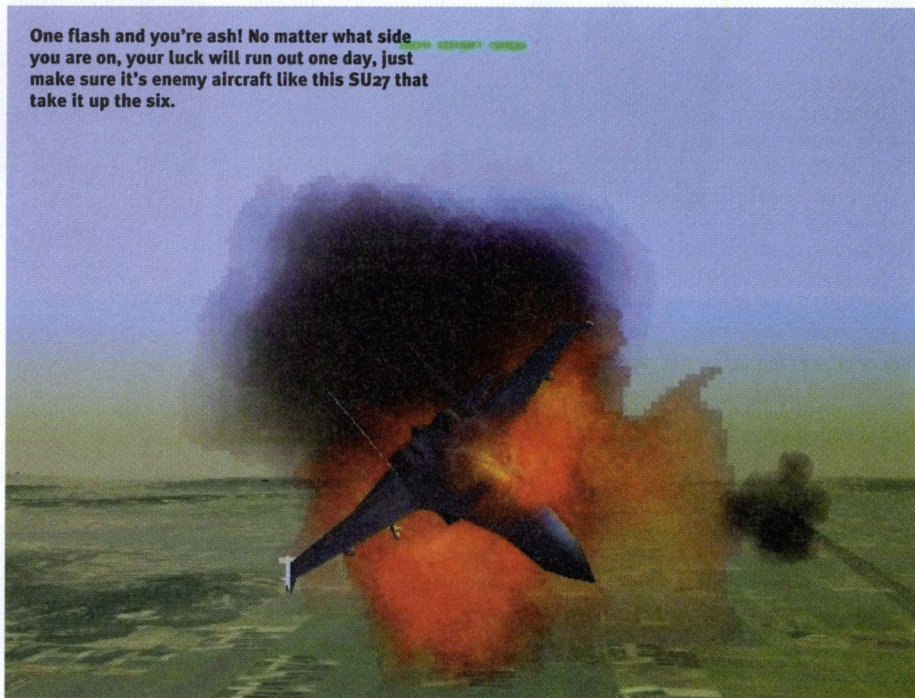


Fig.1

	NICKNAME	GUIDANCE	MAX RANGE (KM)	MIN ALT (KM)	MAX ALT (KM)	ECHELON	Remarks
SA-2	GUIDELINE	Radio Comd	50	0.09	27.4	STRATEGIC	Very old. Designed to destroy high altitude bombers but not fighters.
SA-3	GOA	Radio Comd	22.2	0.05	18.3	ARMY	Very old and easily avoidable. Low Threat.
SA-4	GANEF	Radio Comd	100	0.1	27	ARMY	Fast and deadly if you are flying high. High Threat.
SA-5	GAMMON	Radio Comd	300	0.3	30.4	STRATEGIC	Fast but poor manoeuvrability. Avoidable. Moderate Threat.
SA-6	GAINFUL	SEMI ACTIVE	24	0.05	12	DIVISION	Avoidable. Moderate Threat.
SA-7	GRAIL	IR	5.5	0.01	4.5	BATTALION	IR guided and fired from the rear. Held at every level from squad up
SA-8	GECKO	Radio Comd	12	0.001	12.2	DIVISION	Moderate to High Threat
SA-13	GOPHER	IR	7	0.01	5	REGIMENT	IR from behind as per SA-7. Major Threat at low altitude
SA-15	GAUNTLET	Radio Comd / TV	15	0.01	12	DIVISION	Very manoeuvrable with a burn time of 12 seconds. Major Threat but 12 second burn is restrictive.

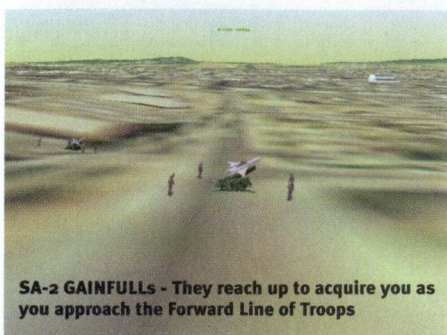
ing evasive action if a SA7 is launched at you from 5 miles behind; it won't reach!

Mission Planning - Know the Task and Gather Intelligence

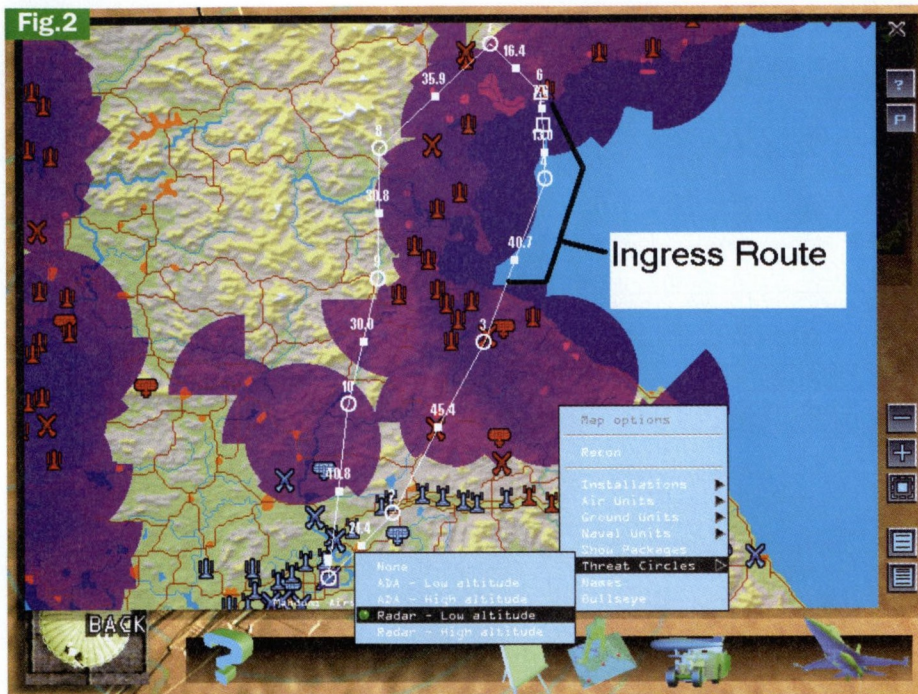
Once you select your mission, prepare the flight plan. In this example my objective is to destroy a vital port crane facility. I have previously "ground pounded" the coast using Suppression of Enemy Air Defence (SEAD) flights. This has given me a safe flight corridor

through which I can move, that is, until the enemy replaces the air defence elements I fried in previous flights. Therefore, I am confident that if I keep above SA-7 and SA-13 maximum effective altitudes, I'll be safe until "feet wet".

We all know that high altitude radar covers all of the DPRK, so you should plan to drop below 500 ft once you think the enemy will start taking notice of you. Then toggle on the low altitude radar circles and try to identify a route that will reduce your visibility.



SA-2 GAINFULs - They reach up to acquire you as you approach the Forward Line of Troops



The Tell-Tale blast as a high altitude SA-2 launches...break right!



your target by conducting satellite recon. Here at Figure 4 I have zoomed in to the target and moved it so it will look as I see it on the final run before weapons release. This is an invaluable step, memorise it because at Mach 1 with your hair on fire and AAA in the air, you don't want to be saying "now which pier am I looking for?"

SAM Avoidance

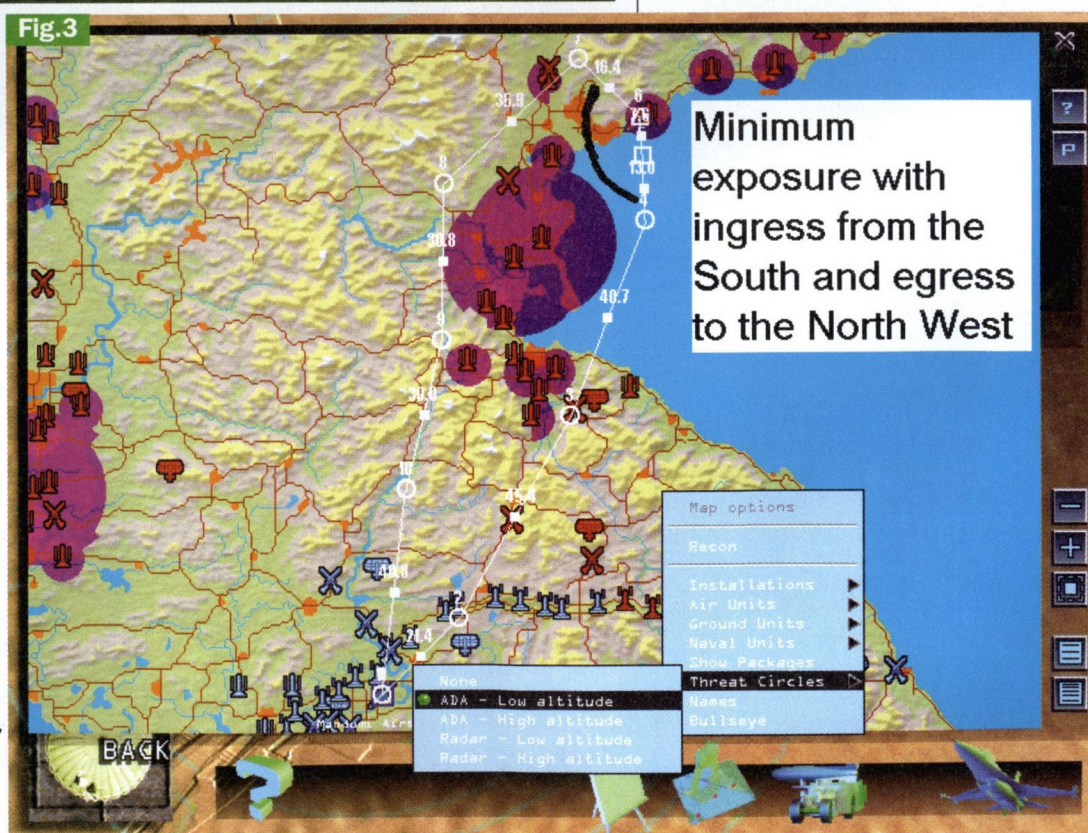
Medium to High altitude SAMs such as the SA-2 and SA-8 are usually detected in F4 as you approach the Forward Line of Troops (FLOT). You'll see this on the Threat Warning Receiver (TWS), and you should immediately break 90 degrees or more to one side, then try to thread your way through the FLOT at another location. An aggressive approach is to send a wingman up high so the weapon's radar illuminates him, then launch a HARM. That's risky though, so let's play safe.



Here at Figure 2 I have moved the waypoints to skirt the low-level radar, or be low at its extremities. I've then selected an ingress route between expected poor coverage.

Next at Figure 3 look at low altitude Air Defence and ensure you modify the waypoints to keep you in the three dimensional air defence zone for the shortest possible time. Then plan the egress route as I have by finding the valleys that will keep you below line of sight of all except very low level air defence weapons such as SA-7s and SA-13s that will be held by all ground units. This is where luck comes in, and in particular, your skill at evading IR missiles that I cover in the next section.

Finally, orient yourself to





The TWS and Launch Light indicate a Radar Guided SAM launch to the left!

Once on the bad guys' side of the FLOT, you will usually be low, and if a missile is launched, your odds are not good! If engaged by a radar guided SAM you will see the launch light. If it is IR guided, there will be no warning unless a wingman gives you a "break turn" queue. Punch J to turn the ECM pod on (if you have one), press 4 to bring up the padlock view and continue to press it until you acquire the missile visually.



Drop Flares and chaff!

Patch 1.07

Yes, I know I said there was not much wrong with the game in January, but time has found the odd fault. By time of printing the 1.07 US/UK Patch should be available at www.micropose.com. Unload F4 (you won't lose your missions/campaigns etc. Download the 6MB patch. Load F4, then the run the patch. This brings improvements such as USB joystick support, the AWACS "Picture" call now reports threats before non-threats, propeller aircraft no longer have jet engine sounds, and a swag of new non-flyable aircraft: the F-22, B-1B, Tu-95 and EA-6. Good stuff, and continued refinement of a near perfect game will develop it in line with our gaming expectations.

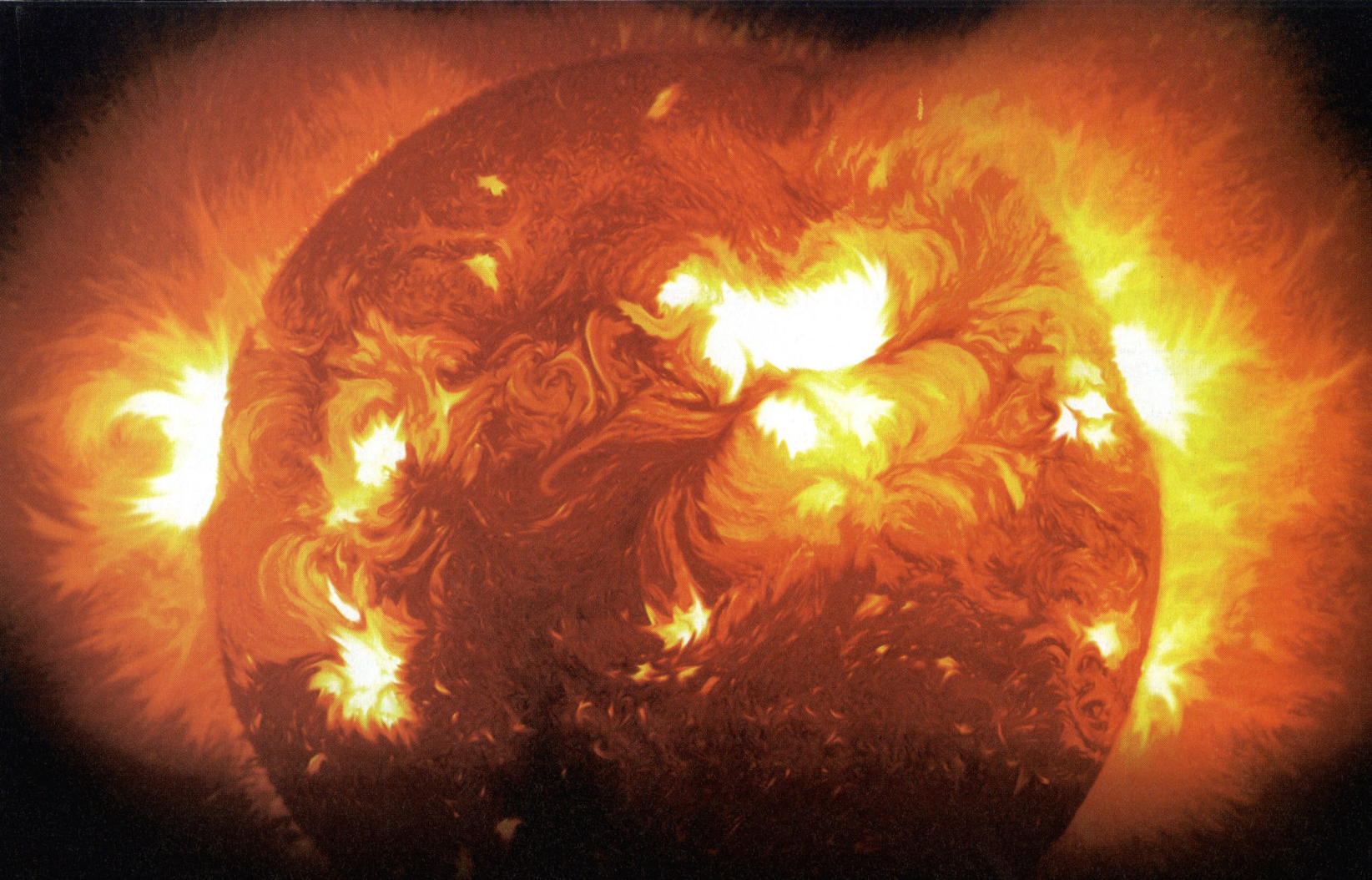
Punch X and Z three times to drop chaff and flares, and follow this immediately by turning to move at 90 degrees to the missile's line of flight. This will make the missile turn at its maximum rate. Make sure you maintain 450 knots so you are within the flight envelope, then as the missile closes, punch Z and X again three times and turn into the missile's line of flight so it has to turn harder. Hopefully the chaff and/or flares will distract the missile long enough so that by the time it re-acquires (if it does) it will have to turn more than its maximum turn rate, and fly on past you. Then, invert and head for the ground. Good luck, you'll need it!

Maj. Ian Lindgren

The First Mission Disk

As you know I indicated in Issue 35 that a Bosnian conflict will be the next combat area. I don't want to enter the Balkan debate because as a Defence Force member I am a servant of the nation and apolitical. Each one of us are our parents' children, so no matter how we see it, war is heart wrenching for all concerned. Nonetheless, in the first F4 Mission Disk I think we might see some TV images such as these three. Watch closely as the luckiest man in "x" exits stage left on "Slam Cam"!





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Sam & Max Hit The Road

[?] I am having trouble in Sam & Max Hit The Road. I can't seem to be able to get into the Giraffe Necked Woman's caravan.

Andrew Colman
Mt. Barker, S.A.

[*] Ok Andrew, here's what you need to do. Upon arriving at the carnival, use the orders on the fire-eater and talk to the Kushmans, then pick up the fur and the bottled severed hand in the hall of oddities and exit through the rear door.

In the Wak-a-Rat stall, get the fishbowl lens. Play Wak-a-Rat, take the prize (a torch) and combine it with the light-bulb. Ask the Cone of Tragedy operator for a ride (be persistent). After doing so, check your inventory then ask the operator about your lost items. He will issue you with a claim ticket. Go to the Lost and Found tent. On leaving, examine the new item you have been given (the World of Fish magnet).

Next, ride the Tunnel of Love. Use the torch on the walls, and once it has been activated, you can use the other items. When you approach the fusebox in the wall, use Max on it. In the tableau, examine the king's beard, and walk through the secret door. Talk to Doug, give him the pecan candy, and he will give you a crowbar to use on Trixie's trailer. Use the crowbar on the trailer door. Inside, take the costume from the hope chest and examine the score card on the inside of the wardrobe door. It will point the way to Gator Golf.

Head for Snuckey's, and ask the attendant to open the jar containing the severed hand.

Dog Day

[?] I have been playing the game Dog Day and am stuck. I am up to the part where you get into Chegga's house. I have been up the elevator and have taken the PC access code from the safe. I've found the computer but can't work out the code.

Also, how do you get out of the washing machine in jail?

Please help,
Cameron
Perth, Tasmania

[*] The strip of paper from the safe needs to be organised. Divide the dots on it divide into L's and you will see a combination. At the desk where the computer is, open the drawer, take out the diskette, turn the computer on and wait for it to boot up.

It will ask you to enter a password so enter the one you learned from the strip of paper in the safe up stairs which is 13542511. Put the disk in the drive, click all the different folders then click backup one by one. Take the disk and exit the building.

To escape the dreaded washing machines, here's what you need to do. When you get thrown in the pound look under the bed and take the dumbbell pin. Now examine the radio to the right of the door and set it to the station at the far right, turn it off and watch your cell mate's feet. When they start twitching click on his hand and you will get a piece of paper with the c.a.t's phone number on it.



Now, face the door and put the dumbbell pin in the key hole. Move it around and try to get 4 clicks in a row. When you do so the pin will come out. Click the handle and go into the hall. Turn right and walk to the end through the two doors into the laundry room.

Now click on the two locked double doors and they will set off an alarm. When the alarm sounds run back to your cell and wait until two guards run past the door. Now exit the cell, turn left and enter the guard room.

Might & Magic VI

[?] I cannot find the crystal of terrax in Might & Magic VI. More to the point, I cannot even find the dungeon that it is located in. Please save my sanity!

Frosty, Internet





***** Greets Frosty, the crystal you seek is in Corlagan's Estate. Here's how to get it. The estate is filled with undead. In particular, ghosts, spectres, and other evil floaty things. They have the ability to magically age you, and there is no easy way to heal from magical aging so save often.

In the first room, head right and progress through the rooms until you pass through a room with a pool of water in it. Note this room as you'll return to it later.

In the long hallway around the corner, take the first right. The next room should have a narrow walkway that is suspended over a very large room. The room has lots of ghosts in it which will float up to attack you when you enter the room. Stay on the walkway and don't fall off.

The next long corridor has a teleporter on it that will instantly take you the length of the corridor. Continue all of the way down, through another room with a walkway (with more ghosts to greet you) and eventually you will get to a room with no more exits. Push the button on the wall.

Return to the entrance and take the left exit (the door exiting this room was opened by that button you pushed). Follow the corridor around and down and around and down. You will reach another room, similar to the one with the pool of water but is instead an empty pit. Cast Featherfall and jump into the pit.

One of the walls at the bottom of the pit is a secret door. From here, work your way through the tunnels and look for a wall in a side passage that's a button. Push it. These tunnels will connect with the large room underneath the suspended walkway. Go nuts with the chests. The tunnel will come out at the room with the pool, the mural behind the pool is a secret door when opened from the inside. Return to the room with the pit.

Continue until you reach a long corridor with short side passages alternating on the



left and right. There is a secret wall at the end of the last corridor on the left - open it for treasure.

Go south to the end of the corridor, turn east, and then turn north. This room has a button which opens the door to the room where the Cystal is located.

The next room is the room underneath the second suspended walkway that you have already passed over. Head towards the east door. Follow this down to another door that opens into the room where the Power Lich is. Yes, he's nasty, but don't try to run away because there is a trap in the corridor that will teleport you into the middle of

the room. The best way to deal with the Lich is to close in for melee as quickly as possible as he is immune to most spells. When you're done killing him, open the chest at the far end of the room and take the crystal of Terrax.



TIPS & TACTICS

First Person Action special

Alien vs Predator

★ The easiest character is the Marine. If you played Quake 2 or Half Life, you'll be able to control him easily.

★ The Marine is just like the normal Quake guy, and is the weakest of the 3 classes. A powerful arsenal however makes him a particularly dangerous foe. Unarmed, he has a minimal likelihood of survival however he's the best choice for the beginning player as you don't need to learn special attacks.

★ Use the Incinerator at close distance to stop aliens or predators from getting close to you.

★ The smartgun automatically tracks targets. The red dot shows the target that is currently active.

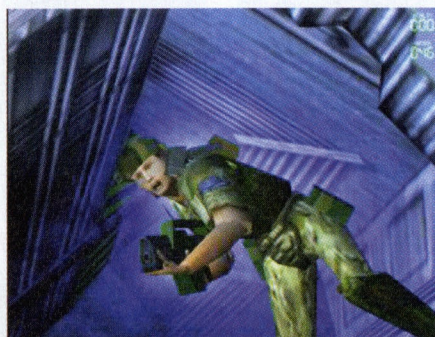
★ Use the Motion tracker to track aliens in the dark. If you track one, don't hesitate to shoot crazily, using the lightning effects (muzzle flash) of your gun to find out where the bastard is hidden.

★ Use the Imaging Magnifier in dark places to try and spot aliens before they can see you.

★ Don't use the Rocket Launcher against aliens in small rooms. You could spray enough acid around to kill yourself.

★ The best weapon to use against predators is the minigun. Never use the incinerator as they have fire resistant armour.

★ If you MUST enter small rooms, work in teams and cover each other. (One uses the motion scanner while the other aims). If you're alone in a small room, quickly shoot inside the room and retreat at once. If someone comes after you, move backwards while firing at him.



★ To successfully play as an alien, hide constantly.

★ In multiplayer to scare the hell out of opponents, hang on a wall and when you see a marine pass below, move a little. The motion scanner will beep and before he has time to ascertain your location, jump down and use your claws to frag him.

★ Try and get a marine to chase you, enter a new room and quickly jump on the wall. As soon as the marine enters the room (you will have created a gap in distance because you're much faster), take him out from behind. Remember, you can get some extra health if you behead him.

★ When almost out of power, cloak yourself to travel to a power source nearby.

★ If you're almost dead and can't get health, activate your auto destruct. Run to your opponents and take them out with you.

★ You can use wristblades while cloaked.

★ Use the shoulder cannon against marines for instant kills.



★ The best weapon against the aliens is the spear gun. Hit an alien with it and he's launched away and can't spray blood on you.

★ Never use wristblades against aliens, it causes too much acid blood loss. This hurts you.

Half Life multiplayer tips

★ If you're running around in a not so crowded multiplayer game and you suddenly hear footsteps, stand still immediately. Your opponent may have heard them too, but because you're standing still thinks he heard his own footsteps.

★ When the multiplayer level starts don't start hunting for players at once. First try to find some good weapons and get as much armour as you can.

★ Don't always move the same way. Some people duck all the time or always strafe right. Use different styles of strafe, jump and duck movements to remain unpredictable.

★ The crowbar is a far underestimated weapon in multiplayer games. Use this weapon to sneak up on enemies and aim for their head (75% damage). Keep in mind that you can hit him 3 or 4 times in one second.

★ If you're in a narrow area and the enemy can't strafe, the crowbar is the most effective weapon. Just aim for the head.



Aliens vs Predator

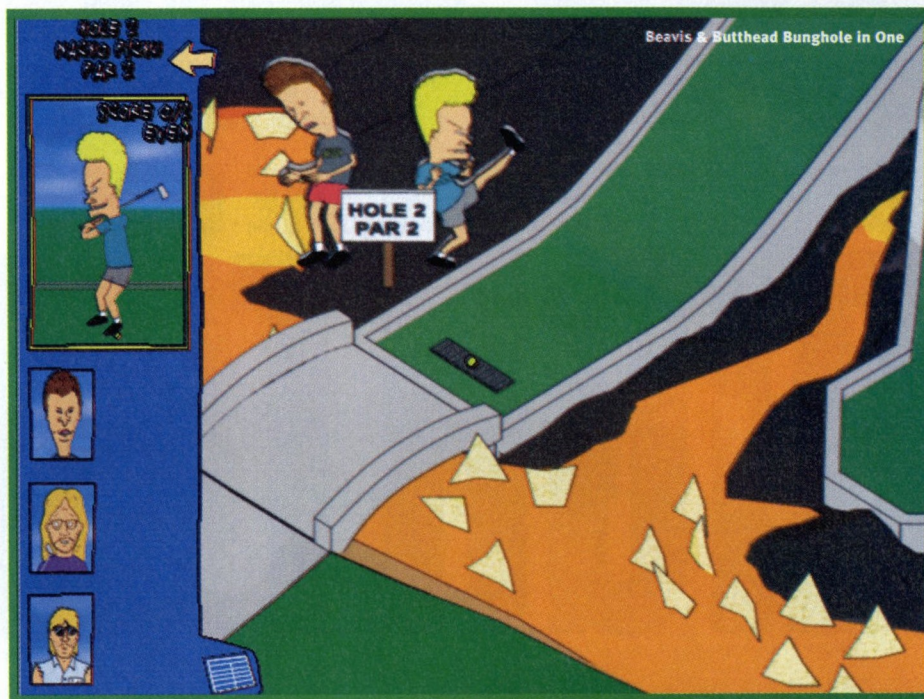
CODE

For when no one's looking...

Blood II

Hit the "t" key and type these codes in:

MPGOD - God mode
MPKFA - Lotsa weapons
MPAMMO - Full ammo
MPCLIP - Spectator mode (no clipping)
MPHEALTHY - maxes out your health
MPWHEREAMI - Displays coordinates
MPHIDEME - Hides coordinates
MPBEEFCAKE - Extra Power (more gore)
MPKILLEMALL - nukes all monsters on current level
MPSPEEDUP - Extra speed
MPSTRONGER - Extra strength
MPCALEB - Changes the character model to Caleb
MPOPHELIA - Changes the character model to Ophelia
MPISHMAEL - Changes the character model to Ishmael
MPGABBY - Changes the character model to Gabriella
MPBERETTA - Beretta, enter twice for dual effect
MPSUBMACHINEGUN - Submachinegun, enter twice for dual effect
MPFLAREGUN - Flaregun, enter twice for dual effect
MPSHOTGUN - Sawed-off Shotgun, enter twice for dual effect
MPSNIPERRIFLE - Gives you the Sniper Rifle
MPHOWITZER - Howitzer
PNAPALMCANNON - Napalm Cannon
MPSINGULARITY - Singularity Generator
MPASSAULTRIFLE - Assault Rifle
MPBUGBUSTER - Bug Buster
MPMINIGUN - Minigun
MPLASERRIFLE - Cobalco Laser Rifle
MPTESLACANNON - Tesla Cannon
MPVOODOO - Voodoo Doll
MPTHEORB - The Orb
MPLIFELEECH - Life Leech
MPGOBLE - displays the text 'Brian L. Goble is a programming god!'
MPSCORPIO - displays the text 'Brian L. Goble is a programming god!'
MPTOTARO - displays the text 'Jim Totaro is da man!'
MPGOSHOPPING - grants all items
MPNICENURSE - +25 health
MPREALLYNICENURSE - 300 health
MPWARD - grants ward, 25 armour



MPNEWCROWARD - grants newcroward, 100 armour
MPCARBONFIBER - Willpower Powerup
MPTAKEOFFSHOES - Invisibility
MPHERKERMUR - Triple Damage Powerup
MPBEANSOFCOOLNESS - Gives a nice selection of weapons

Recoil

During the game, hit CTRL+X to and type in these codes. Note: these codes are case sensitive.

Cavalry - invincible
Hemmit - all weapons
Medic - full shields

Enemy Infestation

Type these codes in during the game for these cheats, though note they won't work if the game has been paused.

gsaheal - Heals all colonists, to full health.
gsaroot - Removes all building roofs.
gsaswap - Allows you to control aliens ("swap sides").
gsakill - Kills selected characters.
gsastop - causes colonists and aliens to freeze and just stand around.
gsabog - Creates a BOG weapon at the cursor. When you pick it up gives you extra defense and lets you lock doors.
gsaknife - Creates a KNIFE weapon, and aliens will ignore you.
gsacmdr - For a commander where the cursor is placed.
gsamedic - For a medical officer where the cursor is placed.
gsaboff - For a technician where the cursor is

Beavis And Butt-Head Do U and Bunghole in one

Enter **gosanta** while at the options screen and start the game. To access a cheat screen that gives you the ability to advance to any location, change inventory items, and other actions - press **F2** during game play. To watch the game play by itself, select the "Exit To Debug Mode", "Tests", and "Game Walkthrough" options. Yeah. Uh-huh. Huhhhhh.

placed.

gsawin - End level (win condition)

Uprising 2

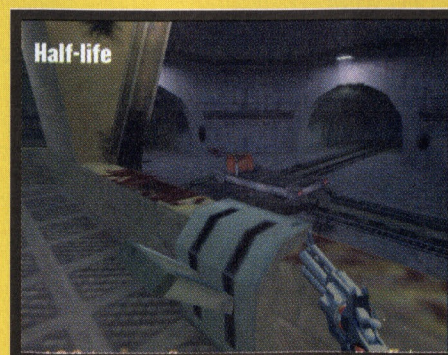
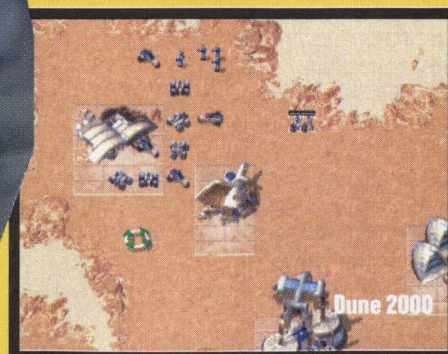
Hit the M key and type in these codes. Press enter after entering in the code to activate that cheat.

chump - god mode
dangerous - unlimited weapons
tuff ass - super weapons
dangerous chump - unlimited weapons and god mode
chump[Enter]chump - super speed and god mode
way mo money - money increased by 5000
slick - suicide
done - win scenario
yoyo - god mode
stormy - rainy weather
clearsky - clear weather
flurry - snowy weather

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100	Missions 1-4
101	Missions 5-10
102	Missions 11-17
103	Missions 18-20 plus tips & Survival tips

Half-Life

110	We've got hostiles
111	Power Up, On the Rails (Part 1)
112	On the Rails (Part 2), Apprehension, Residue Processing
113	Questionable ethics, Surface Tension (Part 1)
114	Surface Tension (Part 2), Forget about the Freeman, Lambda Core, Xen, Gonarrh's Lair
115	Interloper, Nihilanth and weapon descriptions

Dune 2000

120	Atreides Missions 5-7
121	Atriedes Missions 8-9, Harkonnen Mission 5
122	Harkonnen Mission 6-9
123	Ordos Mission 5-9

Starcraft

130	General strategies, Protoss
131	Human, Zerg

Forsaken

140	Volcano subway, nuclear power station, thermal power station, FedBank, Prison Ship, Asteroid Base
141	Bio-Sphere, Subterranean Complex, Capsized Ship, Orbital Station, Shuttle Bus, Military Bus, Tloloc Temple, Secret Level

Rainbow 6

150	General tactics, cheats, weapons
151	Missions 1-16

Dark Reign

160	Freedom Guard 3-5
161	Freedom Guard 6-8
162	Freedom Guard 9-12
163	Imperium 3-8
164	Imperium 11-13

Blade Runner

170	Act 1, Act 2 Tyrell Building, Police Station
171	Act 2 (from Animoid Row), Act 3
172	Act 4, Act 5

Curse of Monkey Island

180	Parts 1 & 2
181	Parts 3, 4, 5 & 6

The Last Express

190	All Q&A
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How to use FAX-ON-DEMAND:

1. If your fax machine has a phone handset, pick it up and dial 1902 220 423. Follow the instructions given by the warm and friendly mystery voice. You will be asked to key-in the 3-digit code for the game/games you want faxed-back.
2. If your fax machine DOES NOT have a handset, ensure your phone is on the same line as the fax, or use the fax's SPEAKER function. Dial 1902 220 423 and follow the instructions. Press 'Start' on your fax when the voice asks you to do so.
3. Stand back and marvel, as moments later the game help you need rolls majestically forth from your fax machine.

Important: All calls are charged at \$2.50 per minute. Calls from mobile and pay phones may attract a higher rate. Make sure you have permission from the person who pays the phone bill if you're under 18! All charges will appear on your regular phone bill.

TECH SUPPORT. If weird stuff happens, or nothing at all, call 02 9212 4222 for help.



BALDUR'S GATE

~THE PLAYGUIDE~

Elminster and Volo only told you half the story. To see the true seedy underbelly of the Sword Coast, stick with PC PowerPlay's Kieran Oakley (better known as the Ravenous Bugblatter Beast of Baal).

CHOOSING A CHARACTER

The Fighter. Just like in the original Advanced Dungeons & Dragons, the easiest class to play in Baldur's Gate is the fighter. A fighter who starts with 18 dexterity, 18 constitution, a suit of splint mail armour and a bow has a better chance of survival than any other character. And while paladins and rangers have their special abilities, they cannot attack as often as fighters and are limited to Good alignments.

The Wizard. The hardest class to play is the wizard because not only do you start with practically no spells, but you can't wear any armour either. Having said that, if you can get your wizard beyond level 2, you will be a force to be reckoned with - especially if you

are a necromancer, as they get to use all the sexy spells.

Druid & Cleric. The cleric and druid classes are a good compromise: they can cast spells and wear armour, but they suffer from a lack of hit points and tend to find themselves playing "doctor" while everyone else is having all the fun.

Thief. If you insist on playing an evil character then the thief is the class for you. Give yourself high stealth abilities and you will go a long way. But remember, there is no honour among thieves.

Bard. For some bizarre reason, two of the best classes in AD&D were left out of Baldur's Gate - the Assassin and the Monk, while the innocuous Bard class was left in. Using Jackie Chan-style open hand attacks

and roundhouse kicks in combat would have made Monks one of the most popular choices to play.

ALIGNMENT

In general, Baldur's Gate is far easier to play if your character is of a neutral alignment, such as Lawful Neutral or Chaotic Neutral. This way you are unlikely to alienate followers of Good or Evil alignment (and you don't have to put up with so much whingeing!).

If you choose an evil alignment you will attract less followers and most NPCs are more likely to attack you. In fact, once you have the Flaming Fist mercenaries after you, you know your days are numbered. Was this a deliberate policy of the designers to encourage good behaviour?

BALDUR'S GATE



On the other hand, even Good-aligned characters can do the occasional bit of pilfering and backstabbing and still get away with it. And a thief with high open locks and stealth abilities is essential to completing the game.

TACTICS

- The key to success in Baldur's Gate is teamwork. A party that fights well together will go places. When travelling outdoors you are highly likely to be ambushed by hordes of screaming random monsters. Put your party in the arrow-head formation with the weaker characters in the middle for protection. The same applies to dungeon bashing - use the two-abreast formation with fighters to the front and rear, and spell casters in the middle.

- In general, make sure you have at least one heavily armoured fighter at the front of the group at all times so he/she can take the initial enemy onslaught. This leaves the rest of the group free to fire missile weapons and spells.

- Make sure ALL your characters have missile weapons: composite bows for your fighters, which have +1 to hit and +2 damage and twice the fire rate of crossbows; short-bows for thieves, and slings for your mages, druids and clerics. In this way you have a virtual "firing squad" that will take out most enemies before they even reach you.

- The only time this tactic doesn't work is when you are facing an enemy that has more bows than you do - the Black Talon Elite in the Cloakwood Forest, for example. In this case you should either head for cover or rush them head on and engage them in close combat.

- Another trick is to simply leave the room or area you are in. Nine times out of ten the enemy will not follow you, and you can return better prepared.

- Obviously, as soon as you encounter an enemy, hit the space bar to pause the game and plan your attacks. Always attack enemy spellcasters first so that you have a chance of interrupting their spells.

GETTING LUCKY

No, we're not talking about the massive underground brothel in Baldur's Gate (which is truly a sight to behold, although all the women look the same and you can't actually sleep with them no matter how much money you offer them - has anyone found the cheat?) but the fact that you need to get your characters up to second level before setting forth into the mines of Nashkel. In the early stages of the game you should wander around a bit to gain some experience for your characters. The mines of Nashkel will be the party's first true test and should not be attempted without at least two characters of second level.

THE WALKTHROUGH

Time for a bit of rough and tumble

Note: There are many sub and side quests in Baldur's Gate. To detail them all would fill an entire issue of PowerPlay and then some. The key to the game is to immerse yourself in the Sword Coast and explore everything that comes your way. The following is an almost direct route to the end game.

CANDLEKEEP

After you have created your character, you need to equip him/her. One hundred gold pieces doesn't buy much these days so you should look around the castle to find more money.

Upstairs in the Inn there is a gem and dagger to be stolen from one of the rooms. In the hospital you can also steal a healing potion. Sell anything you've gathered in Candlekeep to Winthrop and buy some armour and weapons. Buy an extra short bow and some arrows for Imoen, who will join you at the beginning of the next chapter.

After Gorion is killed Imoen will

meet up with you. Go back to where the ambush occurred and take what you can from Gorion's body.

Soon you will meet up with Xzar and Montaron - a well-needed boost to your party. Xzar is a 1st level Mage (Necromancer) of chaotic evil alignment and Montaron is a Halfling fighter/thief. Just like Doctor Smith in Lost In Space, Xzar likes to whine about everything, but he kicks butt if you can get him up a couple of levels. Xzar will give you a potion of healing and tell you that he is heading to Nashkel.

THE FRIENDLY ARM INN

Located north-east of Candlekeep, the Friendly Arm Inn is your first port of call, and is one of the few safe places in the area. When you first arrive be on guard for a mage at the entrance who will cast two mirror images of himself then uses chill hands to try and kill you. If you time your approach so that there are a couple of Friendly Arm Inn guards about they will help you kill the mage.

Once inside you will meet up with Jaheira, a half-elf fighter/druid and Khalid a half-elf fighter. Send Imoen upstairs to steal what



BALDUR'S GATE



she can. There is also a temple next to the Friendly Arm Inn where you can be healed and have your magic items identified.

BEREGOST

From the Friendly Arm you should head south to Beregost, (you cannot enter Baldur's Gate yet) and be wary of wandering monsters. Beregost contains four inns and a blacksmith and many other buildings that a thief can wander in and out of, taking anything of value. However, be very careful when stealing from occupied houses as the Flaming Fist Guards are always about and they are the law of the land. If you get caught you can try to bribe them - always offer 200gp as they will never take 100gp. They don't always take the bribe and will often attack you. If you kill a Flaming Fist Soldier they will hunt you down and find you no matter how powerful your character is. The best bet is not to get caught or run for it when confronted. They will never leave the building you are in so head for the door.

Feldpost Inn is situated in the south west corner of the town and here there is accommodation available and the innkeeper will buy all your gems and magical items and will also sell magical items. The Burning Wizard is situated in the centre of the town and only provides booze and gossip. Watch out for the pickpocketing halfling that will swipe 30gp from a member of your party. If your thief attempts to steal it back your thief will fail the attempt and you will have to kill him so you might as well kill him as soon as you get in there. Next door to the Burning Wizard is the Red Leaf Inn.

Directly south of the Red Leaf at the edge of town is the Jovial Juggler where accommodation is also available. In the south eastern section of town is Thunder Hammer Smithy where all sorts of weapons can be purchased or sold. This blacksmith also sells magical weapons, but for a high price. Your thief can break into the blacksmith's at night and steal a bastard sword +1, however this is difficult to do. If you are noticed the Flaming Fist will kick your ass and the locks are hard to pick. The building next to the smith contains some big redbacks and a pair of old boots so don't bother.

To the east of Beregost is a temple where healing can be performed and identification of items. They also do baptisms and weddings, we are told.

NASHKEL

Nashkel is a one street town with an Inn, a blacksmith, a temple and barracks. Upon entering the Inn the party is attacked by Neira, a worthy foe that will conjure up a rigid thinking spell on the closest member of the party and will then use an entangle spell. Neira then attempts to beat the nearest party member's head in with her mace. In order to kill her you must missile equip all the members of your party and spread them out upon entering the room. Although entangled, you can still attack effectively with missile weapons. When you kill her you get lots of good stuff, including a helm of Infravision.

During your first encounter with the blacksmith he asks you to bring him back a wolf's pelt. You will encounter a strange white wolf that spits blue balls of energy at your party between Nashkel and the mines. Once this wolf is killed its pelt can be taken and will fetch 500gp when you take it to the blacksmith in Nashkel.

In the Southern part of Nashkel on the main street you'll meet Minsc, a schizophrenic ranger with a guinea pig fetish. Minsc will join your group if you agree to



help him save his lady friend trapped and held hostage by Gnolls. Minsc has a berserk special ability, but don't get too close to him when he's in this state or he will attack you. (He doesn't like you touching his guinea pig, or any other part of him for that matter.)

The mayor of Nashkel will ask your party to rid the mines of monsters and if you don't select the option that you want some sort of financial gain for this task you won't get any gold for it. You are also approached by a fat man that mistakes you for Greywolf and tells you that he has 200gp for you. If you select the option that plays along with the idea that you are Greywolf he will give you the 200gp. This can lead to problems later on in the game. If you travel south from the mines and to the west of the map you will run into a character called Prism. Whilst in town you will be told that Prism has run off with stolen emeralds and that there is a reward for his capture. Just as you meet up with Prism, Greywolf enters the picture and no matter what option you select he recognises your party and attacks for impersonating him. He is a powerful and difficult foe.

Once you reach the southern end of the town of Nashkel you will notice a path leading west to a bridge. On this bridge there is Edwin, a 1st level conjurer who asks you to help him kill a witch to the east of town. He will join your party but as with Minsc once he levels up if you haven't helped him with



BALDUR'S GATE



his quest he will leave and take any goodies that you endowed him with along the way. If at any stage you kick Xzar or Montaron out of your party they will both leave. However you can always find them again where you left them and they will rejoin your party.

East of Nashkel there is a carnival - one of the dullest carnivals we've ever seen. It's just a bunch of out of work actors who try and get you to gamble your money away.

THE GNOLL STRONGHOLD

The Gnoll Stronghold is west of Nashkel and to get there you must pass through some terrain on the east side of the river. This area houses a Xvart village and is good practise for the party. Follow the path west until you see another path to the north and a bunch of Xvarts that your missile weapons can bring down easily. Just before you kill the last Xvart in the camp he tells the party that Ursula will take revenge. Ursula is a big brown bear that attacks from the east and can catch your party unawares. Check out her cave for goodies but watch out for the other bear.

There is a bridge leading to the Gnoll stronghold guarded by two Ogrillions that ask for 200gp to pass. If you select the right option you can get them down to 100gp and gain 250 experience points, otherwise you have to fight them. Sometimes you are better off avoiding battles.

On the other side of the bridge there are two paths: one going straight ahead, another leading down a slope. The declining path leads to Xvarts and two caves. Xvarts are in both of the caves and there is also a Carrion Crawler in the larger cave. This cave also contains a chest with goodies inside. The other



path splinters off, one going straight ahead the other going up a slight incline heading north. The path straight ahead leads to Gnolls and stairs up to more Gnolls in groups of two or three at a time.

There are stairs leading down to more Xvart - nothing too exciting though, and the stairs lead upwards to Gnolls that you can entice out and down the stairs, cleaning them up with your missile weapons. There is not much here but good practice for 1st level players. Be careful when engaging the Gnolls in hand to hand combat as they are powerful creatures and can inflict severe damage to a character with one blow.

THE MINES OF NASHKEL

South of Nashkel are the mines which consist of five separate levels. The mines are full of Kobold bands, spiders and worst of all, lethal traps. Your characters should be at least second level before attempting this area or you stand very little chance of getting through.

Upon entering the first level, follow the corridor to a circular room where there will be two corridors heading south. Take the one to the right of the party and follow it south. Then take the first corridor to the east, or left of the party, and the first corridor south or to the right of the party, and this will lead to the second level. Your thieves should have the detect trap button pressed and you should remember to reselect this option after battles.

On the second level, take



your first right then pass two corridors on your right, take the third right, a hairpin corner and follow this passage to the third level.

The third level is tough - be on guard for traps everywhere. Take the first right then the first left then veer to the right a little and head south along a corridor that has a bridge over a cavern and the exposed rock is a red-dish colour. Continue south until you come to the 4th corridor to your left where you will pass over a bridge of fire which leads to a doorway.

When you come to the doorway there are three traps which your thieves can identify. Take the extreme right hand side all the way as close as you can to the door then select the exit door option and your character will walk to the door without setting off the traps.

The fourth level has a bridge ahead of the party. When you get on the bridge, Kobolds fire arrows of fire at you. Once you kill them you can wander around to the left of this circular room. There is a Ghoul here but once you come to the end there is an option to leave the mines. Do not take this option if you haven't already gone on to level 5 as you can't get back in this way.



BALDUR'S GATE



In level five there is nothing to be seen in the cave ahead of you so take the corridor to the right. Here you meet and fight Mulahey, a very powerful half orc cleric who calls on his hordes of Kobolds to attack you. Use the narrow corridor to your advantage. Jaheira's entangle spell can hold them off while the party takes on Mulahey. Keep moving so as not to allow Mulahey to put a spell on you. You will find letters and Gauntlets AC 8 in his chest plus his boots that are 50% bonus on all attacks by electricity. There is also a short sword +1 and the ring found on Mulahey will grant a cleric or druid an extra spell per level. The letters in the chest state that his contact is Tranzig and that he is staying at Feldpost Inn at Beregost. Elf Xan is being held captive by Mulahey and is a 2nd level mage. If you have lost any party members he is a good find and will join you.

If you exit via level 4 you will be transported to a region east of the mines. This region is extremely difficult, with deadly Ankheg creatures around and a loony mage that has created super mustard that your weapons have no effect on. There are also some undead creatures lurking around. You're better off heading back to Nashkel for your reward.

Once you get to Nashkel you will be confronted by Nimbun, a nasty mage who is very difficult to destroy. Nimbun uses charm person spells, magic missiles and more deadly magic. Use the soldiers in the town to help you defeat him.

BEREGOST PART 2

Head back to Beregost and Feldpost Inn where you confront Tranzig who tells you that the bandits are in Peldvale and Larswood. Peldvale will appear on your map when this occurs, however, you can only get

there if you return to Friendly Arm Inn and head east from there. You should kill Tranzig so he doesn't warn Tazok.

If you approach the bard Garrick in Beregost he will ask you if you want to earn 300gp for protecting a lady from thugs. When you meet her outside the Red Leaf Inn everything does not seem like it should. The three men that approach her do not seem to be what she has described them as but your party is better off not attacking the three characters as they are pow-

erful mages. You will have to kill her and will be given a potion of invulnerability if you do so. The bard Garrick may join your party if you wish but he is only a second level bard and does not have any magic ability yet. However, when he plays his music your party will have a +1 bonus luck on all encounters.

In the Jovial Juggler Inn an officer Vai of the Flaming Fist tells you that she will give you 50gp for every bandit scalp that you bring her. If you enter the Red Leaf Inn an assassin will attack you though he is fairly easy to kill. You will find a scroll on him that states that there is a reward of 350gp on your head.

At this stage if you enter the temple next to the Friendly Arm Inn and have more than

400gp on you, you will notice that there is a raise the dead option that you can use for any of your fallen characters. But if the dead character has had a limb chopped off in battle this limb will be missing when they are raised. You cannot raise your own character from the dead, however, though there is no 'arm in trying!

PELDVALE

Peldvale is a dangerous region: look out for the evil cleric Silke who will attempt to persuade you to kill the Flaming Fist soldier pursuing her. She will join your group if you do this but then you become an enemy of the Flaming Fist and you will not survive long in the game. There are many bandits about but they are fairly easy to kill. The Black Talon Elite though are extremely deadly so use all force available to stop them. They use Ice arrows so you are better off engaging in hand to hand combat than missile melees.

THE BANDIT CAMP

As you continue further east in Peldvale you will eventually be approached by Raiken. You can engage Raiken in combat immediately or take the option that you want to join the Bandits. He will take you to Tazok who will question you and if you take the option "It's better than Dungeon Crawling," you will have a free reign in the bandit camp.

If you take any other option you will have



BALDUR'S GATE



to fight Tazok but you can't kill him at this stage. If you survive for long enough he will let you join his group then leave for the mines. Raiken has a +1 War Hammer, a +1 medium shield and full plate armour +1. If you have a potion of absorption your most powerful fighter can take this and engage Raiken as the potion will negate the use of all blunt weapons.

The Bandit Camp consists of five small huts and a main hut. Search all the chests around the camp and kill all the bandits and hobgoblins. The main hut contains a mage, flin, hobgoblin and a fighter that attack your party. The hobgoblin fires poisonous arrows and the mage is powerful. Use all available means to defeat these powerful characters as they are difficult to bring down, but there are many goodies inside this hut. The hobgoblin's bow is a Longbow of Marksmanship and his boots are boots of avoidance +5 vs missile weapons. The mage's robe is +20% bonus fire resistant and the chest contains several spell scrolls and gems and coinage.

However the chest has a powerful booby trap that will kill anyone that tries to open it. Your thief should disarm it, otherwise you will lose a member. You must open this chest because it reveals the Bandit's main lair which will appear on your large map. Go through the whole camp and search all the chests and containers. There are no booby traps in the rest of the camp. Beware to the south of the Bandit's lair as there are four or five Zombies that will attack so keep away from here unless you can bring them down.

To the east of the Peldvale more terrain will appear on your map. This is an extremely difficult area to explore and I only recommend it to the very experienced or the insane. If you enter the terrain from the east, Ankheg creatures will attack your party whichever way you go. These insect-like burrowing creatures spit deadly green slime at your characters. Each time this happens there is a chance that death will occur. They are almost impossible to beat in battle and your best bet



is to run. If you enter from the south you will encounter a 2nd level paladin who will join your party. He has the power to heal and 5 detect evil spells a day and 2 protection against evil spells.

geon bash until you reach level 3, where the Black Talon Elite are waiting for you in large numbers with poison arrows and spells. The secret is to not approach them from the front but go around the back of the room and then draw them out one by one.

At last a stocky dwarven fighter will join your group and you have only to take out Davaeorn.

When you fight Davaeorn (who is waiting on the fourth level of the mines) make sure you first disarm his traps to avoid having to fight his battle horrors. Dispel his protective spells and summon a few creatures to lead the attack and to prevent your party from being targeted by his spells. Once you've killed Davaeorn, flood the mine by giving 100 gold to Rill, who is on the second floor of the mine, and then talking to the miner on the first floor who is standing near the plug.

THE CLOAKWOOD FOREST

The Cloakwood Forest is actually spread over 4 maps and is full of huge spiders, so make sure you stock up on antidote for all of your characters. There is also a secret sect of druids lurking around who will attack you if you do not behave yourself and Coran, a friendly elf archer who will join your party. The elf is determined to track down a Wyvern Lair, which is on the third map - this is a worthwhile mission because once you find and kill the Wyverns, you will get lots of cool magic items.

THE CLOAKWOOD MINES

Before you are ready to take on the Black Talon Elite you should head back to the Friendly Arm Inn and get some well-earned rest. Make sure all your characters are fighting fit, then head back into the forest. Be warned though, the wandering monsters around here usually include Wyverns and spiders - a deadly combination.

The Bandit Lair is actually a small fort with a dungeon below it. A number of bandits are guarding the area but the real challenge is the mage and cleric waiting for you just beyond the entrance. You will need all your resources to overcome these dudes, and there is much worse to come! Once you've found the entrance to the mine you're in for a pretty straightforward dun-

BALDUR'S GATE

Explore Baldur's Gate at your leisure, but don't enter the Iron Throne headquarters (which is in the south, middle sector of the city) right away. Complete Scar's quests prior to talking to Eltan or entering the Iron Throne building. The Thieves' Guild tasks are among the most interesting, but not very rewarding. You should pick up both the



BALDUR'S GATE



Helm and Cloak of Balduran. The helm is on the second floor of the Helm and Cloak Inn, in a trapped secret compartment. The cloak is with Quenash, a "lady of the evening" in the Undercellar, which you can access either through the sewers or through the Blushing Mermaid Inn.

Don't disregard the quest to free Lothandar if he initiates the quest. If you don't solve the quest once it has begun, your party will die at the end of ten days. When you're ready to end the chapter, talk to Eltan and then take out the Iron Throne headquarters. Return to Eltan once you've gathered the notes from the top floor of the Iron Throne building.

THE CANDLEKEEP CATACOMBS

When you get into the library you'll run into Koveras, who will give you a ring of protection and encourage you to wipe out the Iron Throne leaders. Regardless of whether or not you attack Rieltar and his crew, they'll be killed off and you'll be blamed for their deaths. You can get some additional magic items by doing the job yourself. There are three areas in the Candlekeep catacombs, and they are loaded with traps. All of the NPCs you'll



encounter, other than Deder and Arkanis, are doppelgangers, so don't let your guard down. To end the chapter, you'll have to get through all three catcomb maps, and

there's a tough battle with an enemy party on the third map.

THE FINAL CHAPTER

Your goals in this chapter consist of: a) going to the Iron Throne building and confronting Cythandria and obtaining Sarevok's diary; b) killing the assassins in the Undercellar to get an invitation to Sarevok's coronation; c) disrupting the coronation (perhaps stopping to save Eltan in Flaming Fist headquarters along the way); and d) pursuing Sarevok to the Thieves' Guild and then to the Undercity.

Cythandria waits at the top of the Iron Throne building, with a couple of ogre guards. In the middle of the Undercellar, you'll be confronted by Slythe and Krystin. They'll immediately attack you, and Slythe is particularly dangerous, since he is hasted and blurred. Cast a dispel magic spell as soon as possible, and haste a few of your own fighters (or use oil of speed) to even the odds. A hold person or charm person spell can end the fight in your favour very quickly, if the assassins fail their saving throws. Pick up the invitation on the body of Slythe.

Travel to the Duchal Palace and show Bill the guard your invitation. Make sure you have Sarevok's diary and/or the notes from

one of the dukes survives. Cast a dispel magic spell on the greater doppelgangers to slow them down. Once the doppelgangers are dead, you'll have to briefly fight Sarevok, but after you get a few hits in on him he'll disappear. Talk to the dukes and you'll be transported to the Thieves' Guild.

When you're in the Thieves' Maze, move slowly to try to only get one opponent confronting you at once. After you pass a couple of doom guards, you'll have to face two skeleton warriors in one of the toughest battles in the game. The corridor is also trapped with a series of lightning and fireball traps. The skeleton warriors are virtually immune to magical spells and their arrows act like arrows of fire, even though they are not magical. Send a thief (hasted or wearing boots of speed) up the corridor to disarm the traps (you can disarm the first couple before you'll encounter the skeleton warriors) and then flee back down the corridor to try to lure the skeleton warriors back to your party, one at a time. You can ambush the skeleton warriors when they round a corner. You can also use animated undead of your own, or summoned monsters, to draw the fire of the skeleton warriors while your fighters try to move in to engage in melee combat.

A powerful group of Iron Throne members is hunting for Sarevok near the middle of the Undercity. Consisting of both fighters and mages (and an ogre companion), they are dangerous adversaries. They tend to cast fireballs (and use arrows of detonation) to start the combat, so you're better off summoning some monsters or animating some dead to use as targets to draw fire away from your party.

Sarevok's lair is in the northwest area of the Undercity. There are several traps in the centre of the room (avoid the "skull" symbol altogether) and several more along the sides. Use a thief to clear away the traps along the sides, and arm your party with the best missile weapons they have available. You might want to cast a silence 15 foot radius or miscast magic spell on Samaj as well. Create lots of summoned monsters/creatures and animated undead to use as cannon fodder. If you charge into the room, you won't last 10 seconds.

The game will end as soon as you kill Sarevok, so you don't even need to take out his allies. By concentrating your ranged fire at Sarevok you'll take him down fairly quickly. He's a tough opponent to go toe-to-toe with, so you should lure him into chasing one character around while the others hit him with missile weapons. Happy hunting!

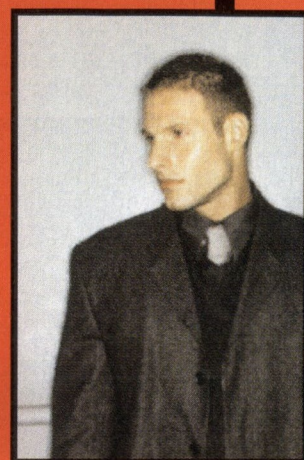
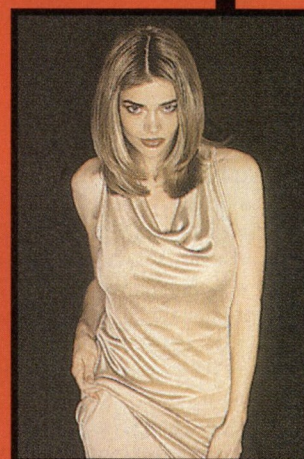
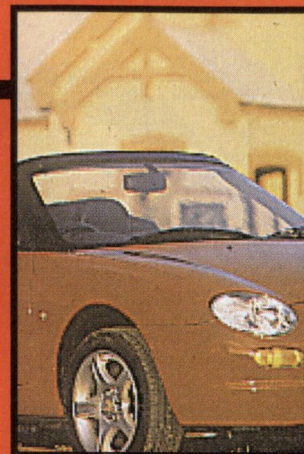


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QUAKE NEWS

WITH QUAKE3 STILL ON THE HORIZON, THERE'S BEEN NO BETTER TIME TO GET INTO QUAKE2. THIS MONTH WE LIST OUR MOST RECOMMENDED MODS AND WEB SITES. BY ELIH BRADING.

TOP FIVE QUAKE2 LINKS:

1) **PLANETQUAKE** - the one we've all come to know, love and trust - "the epicentre of everything Quake." The Quake-ish humour and proficient content makes this an instant winner. An extremely well organised and professional site: if it's not here, chances are it probably doesn't exist.

<http://planetquake.com/>

2) **GAMERS.COM** Guide For Quake2 - Written by Dennis Fong aka Thresh, you know that the site's going to contain at least some informative data pertaining to Quake2 gameplay. Not only does it have guides for the more popular deathmatch maps, but also hardware reviews, mods, developments and many other useful tidbits.

<http://gamers.com/quake2/>

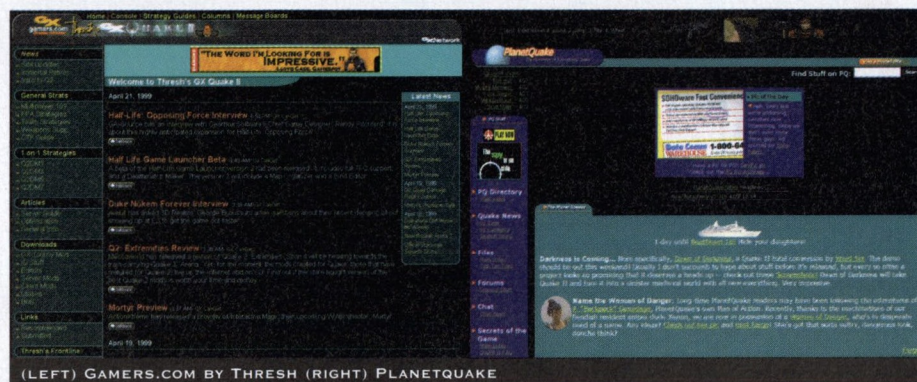
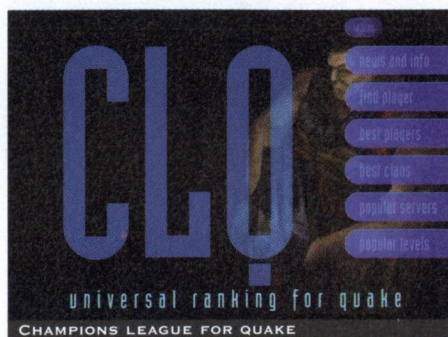
3) **Sluggo's MOD Central** - Contains informative descriptions for the more popular mods available for Quake2. Don't have time to find a decent DM modification for your next LAN party? Drop in and see Sluggo, I'm sure he'll offer the appropriate solution.

<http://planetquake.com/modcentral/>

4) **Player Models Page** - Sick of using the same old model and listening to the repetitive pain sounds of your player? Q2PMP is the site for player models. Although I'm sure you'd have no trouble finding this from the PQ main page, this site's so damn good I just had to place a direct link.

<http://planetquake.com/q2pmp/>

5) **CLQ** - The Champions League For Quake is a site that records all your online death-



(LEFT) GAMERS.COM BY THRESH (RIGHT) PLANETQUAKE

match statistics and rates them against the rest of Quake2's online world. There's no need to register, if you've ever played Quake2 online before, then you'll be listed along with almost 1,000,000 other deathmatchers.

<http://www.theclq.com/>

TOP FIVE QUAKE2 MODS:

1) **atchmod** - a server side mod that adds a plethora of options to spice up your normal, static-modded matches. Being entirely menu-driven means that it's a breeze to setup while still remaining extremely powerful.

<http://planetquake.com/matchmod/>

2) **CryHavoc** - CryHavoc is a class-based deathmatch conversion. It adds eight different player classes to the game: the EM trooper, marine, navyseal, rigger, rocketman, sapper, techy and the vampire. Try them all to see which one best suits your playing style.

<http://www.planetquake.com/cryhavoc/>

3) **Holywars** - a mod that is absolutely fantastic at an LAN of four players, Holywars makes one player the "saint" while the others attempt to gain possession of the halo in an effort to rack up the frags.

<http://www.planetquake.com/holywars/>

4) **Night Hunters** - adds different player classes to the game - though that's just the start of it. Night Hunters pitches you into a world of darkness, with only your flashlight and weapons as companions. Think stealth, think scared, think satisfaction.

<http://www.planetquake.com/nighthunters/>

5) **ArenaCTF** the 3-on-3 version of capture the flag for Quake2. A collection of maps and artwork designed for small CTF games - with some flag captures taking just 7 seconds!

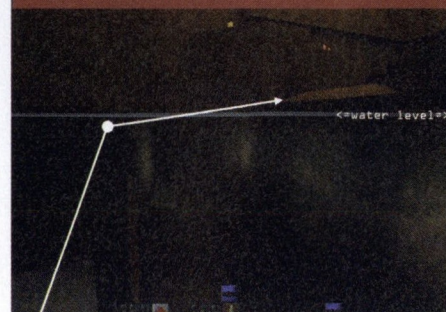
Requires the official CTF modification to play.

<http://deconstruct.terrafusion.com/>

TACTICS Q2DM1 UPDATE

Each month, in this very news guide, instalments will be added to your repertoire of gaming knowledge. Although many of them have been known for quite some time, others will be news to you all. Starting off from the line is a useful slopejump/strafejump from the railgun pool on q2dm1:

Using the underwater pipe, swim/walk up the left side of it. As you reach the apex of the pipe (the highest point before it flattens out), strafe jump (or circle jump) from the corner of the pipe. If you have timed it correctly, you should end up out of the water and on the edge of the bank (this also takes into account the "water-jump" effect, which is often quite difficult to do).



THE ART OF THE ALIAS

This month's most useful alias is used to quickly change the volume up and down from your keyboard. It's extremely useful for players who are lazy like me and couldn't be bothered reaching for the volume control on the speakers and can't afford to buy a multimedia keyboard.

```
bind u vup
bind y vdn
alias vup volume_1
alias vdn volume_0
alias volume_0 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 0;set vu 1;set vd w; alias vup
volume_1; alias vdn volume_0;echo
VOL |----- 0"
alias volume_1 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 0.1;set vu 2;set vd o; alias vup
volume_2; alias vdn volume_0;echo
VOL |----- 1"
alias volume_2 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 0.2;set vu 3;set vd 1; alias vup
volume_3; alias vdn volume_1;echo
VOL |----- 2"
alias volume_3 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 0.3;set vu 4;set vd 2; alias vup
volume_4; alias vdn volume_2;echo
VOL |----- 3"
alias volume_4 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 0.4;set vu 5;set vd 3; alias vup
volume_5; alias vdn volume_3;echo
VOL |----- 4"
alias volume_5 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 0.5;set vu 6;set vd 4; alias vup
volume_6; alias vdn volume_4;echo
VOL |----- 5"
alias volume_6 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 0.6;set vu 7;set vd 5; alias vup
volume_7; alias vdn volume_5;echo
VOL |----- 6"
alias volume_7 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 0.7;set vu 8;set vd 6; alias vup
volume_8; alias vdn volume_6;echo
VOL |----- 7"
alias volume_8 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 0.8;set vu 9;set vd 7; alias vup
volume_9; alias vdn volume_7;echo
VOL |----- 8"
alias volume_9 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 0.9;set vu 10;set vd 8; alias vup
volume_10; alias vdn volume_8;echo
VOL |----- 9"
alias volume_10 "play parasite/paratck4;set
s_volume 1;set vu w;set vd 9; alias vup
volume_10; alias vdn volume_9;echo
VOL |----- 10"
```

VERSION 1.21 OF Q22P RELEASED!

Quake2 2 Player is a modification that allows you to run two player deathmatch games of Quake2 on the one, single computer - ingenious! No longer will you have an excuse for ever owning a N64 to play Goldeneye because you can't afford a network at home. This is Black Moon Development's answer to the console - and a damn fine solution it is. Using a Graphical User Interface (GUI) to setup and start a game, you'll be on your way to deathmatching in no time. Customise play-



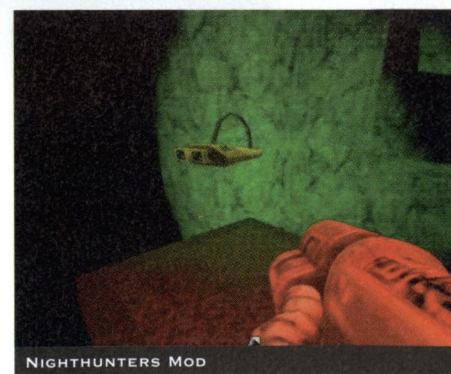
ORANGE SMOOTHIES "ROCKET OLYMPICS". PROVE YOUR ROCKET JUMPING SKILLS BY COMPETING IN EVENTS SUCH AS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) HEIGHT, DISTANCE AND ACCURACY. STRICT RULES APPLY (BOTTOM LEFT). SCRIPTS ARE CONSIDERED A BANNED SUBSTANCE.

er skins, controls and other various settings using the informative, hands-on tutorials - nothing could be easier. Player two's keys can be re-mapped and personal binds can be set up through adding them to a simple text box. Once you've chosen your starting map and frag/time limit, all that's required is one click on the start button and you're away! Two small versions of Quake2 will start, and you can both be playing through the same monitor. Sure, it's not as good as an LAN game, but at least it's a low-ping environment and let's not forget - at least it's Quake2! I recommend that you be running a Pentium 266Mhz with at least 64Mb RAM to achieve playable framerates.

Q22P is available to download from:
<http://www.converted2.com/bmd/>

AND THE WINNER IS...

Think you're a proficient rocket jumper now because you can make it to the mega-health on q2dmr? Well try your moves at Orange Smoothie Productions' ROCKET OLYMPICS and we'll see just how good you are. This has to be one of the most professional freelance packages ever put together. It makes you grin from ear to ear from the moment you enter the games arena. Rocket Olympics judges you based on distance, accuracy or height and has different degrees of difficulty that alternate as you progress. After playing a professional package like the Rocket Olympics, it makes you wonder why the



sport isn't being offered at the Sydney 2000 games...

Download it today from:
<http://www.planetquake.com/osp/>

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WITH QUAKE

1 ON 1 LEVEL GUIDES

Q2DM3

~THE FRAG PIPE~

KNOWN BY QUAKERS AS "THE ONE", THE FRAG PIPE IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE MOST POPULAR QUAKE 2 DM MAP TO COME OUT OF ID SOFTWARE.

Q2DM3 contains two main items which you should attempt to control: one is pertinent, the other advantageous. The yellow armour area is extremely important to control. Being relatively accessible to all players, the focus is shifted towards this item. The other item to maintain order over is the megahealth. Although not nearly as important as the yellow armour, the acquisition of 100 extra health points could mean the destruction of another player - especially if it's in a one-on-one situation. Many players will jump across the lava and climb up the ladder (if you choose this path, make sure you climb up the left-hand side of the ladder to avoid getting stuck on the roof). The quickest way is to rocket jump to the megahealth, though if you are one of those people who benefit from high framerates, a double jump from the button that controls the frag pipe lava-levels will see you through with the goods.

Listen very carefully...

Although it applies to a copious amount of maps, understanding the basic sounds that are emulated throughout the level is a basic necessity for victory. Besides general gameplay sounds (footsteps, firing), there are two main

sequences of sounds that should invoke action on your part: armour shards and the sounds of players jumping. Due in part to a combination of armour shards producing the largest sounds on the map and that there is only a single cluster on the map, based on your relevant location it is quite easy to decipher where your opponent is heading. Do not try and chase after them, instead attempt to position yourself on higher ground and ambush your opponent (the same basic premise will occur against multiple opponents of course). The jumping sounds on this map are extremely important to listen out for due to the stupendous ladder count on the map (6 of them in fact). Two sequential jumps would indicate that a player is attempting to climb the long ladder that leads to the Rocket Launcher or that they are after the megahealth.

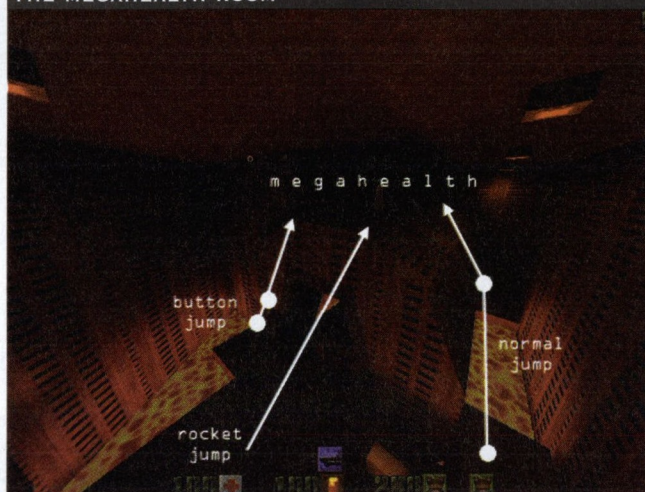
Perfect equilibrium

Although many would consider a small death-match map that contains both the quad damage and the invulnerability powerups as being imbalanced, Q2DM3 succeeds in maintaining equilibrium through the "low-accessibility" factor. Both powerups are quite difficult to obtain, thus only advanced players will have the ability to control them. I play Q2DM3 solely for the pleasure in becoming the "purple-god" - an invincible player who possesses four times the offensive capabilities.

Get hyper

By far the best weapon to be using while quadded on q2dm3 is the hyperblaster (and if not attainable - the super shotgun). Two cells is all that's required to polish off a player with full health. Be careful though, improper

THE MEGAHEALTH ROOM



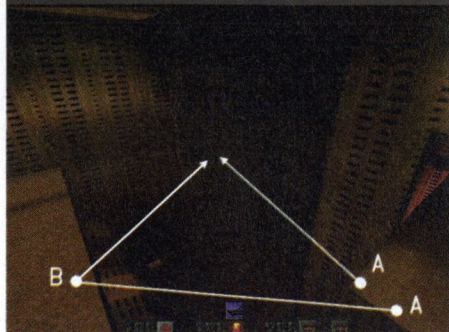
WEAPON LOCALES



DON'T GET STUCK ON THE ROOF



LISTEN FOR LONG JUMPS

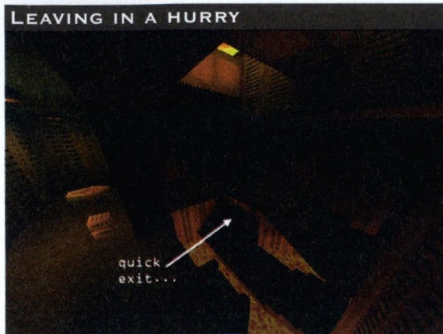


TIP

To access this powerup, face the opposing wall and execute a reverse-rocket jump - under most circumstances, you will find yourself landing directly on the invulnerability.

1 ON 1 LEVEL GUIDES

LEAVING IN A HURRY



use of the hyperblaster will see your opponents running - with you not even getting a chance to see them let alone take a shot (due to how loud it is and how bright the light is that radiates from the projectiles).

Up close and personal

Under normal circumstances, the most effective weapons for Q2DM3 are the rocket launcher and super shotgun. The tight corridors mean that "shooting ground" with the rocket launcher is an extremely effective tactic, while the walls surrounding opponents can also be shot with some freedom. The bounce-back from projectile explosives is less noticeable due to the restrictions of the walls, therefore allowing you to quickly diminish their health with a few well-placed shots. The instant hit ability and the instant-firing factor of the super shotgun are extremely helpful within the frag-pipes close-quartered corridors. Often times you will run into players as you turn the right-angled corners, two shells to the face will turn their day into one less jovial...

Weapon tactics

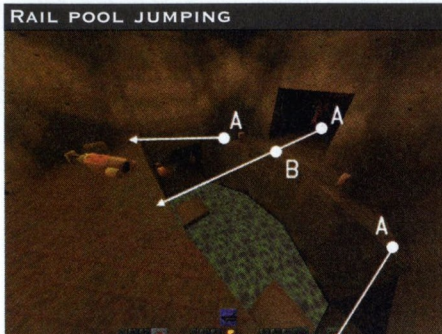
Due to the abundance of ammo, and the dead-ended corridors, the grenade launcher can be rendered extremely effective under certain situations. If you find your opponent in one of the dead ended corners, start pumping grenades in there at differing angles. Make sure that you use the walls to reflect the projectiles as this will mean that the grenades will be exponentially more difficult to avoid. Personally, I use the grenade launcher while attempting to control the Yellow Armour area. Lobbing grenades into corridors, along the floor of the room and up to the super shotgun will always score you a few frags while you wait for the armour to respawn.

The railgun is only effective on this map in a few discrete locations. The u-shaped upper pathway (that connects the rocket launcher to the machine gun) will allow for you to line up your shots, make sure however that you do not stand near the walls as extra splash damage may be inflicted. From the super shotgun plateau, the railgun can be effective to take out people at the yellow armour or opponents within the rocket launcher vicinity. Let instinct tell you when and when not to use this weapon, based primarily on your flick rail and motor skills...

Good health

When wounded from a duel, make your way to the railgun pool. This area contains 60%

RAIL POOL JUMPING

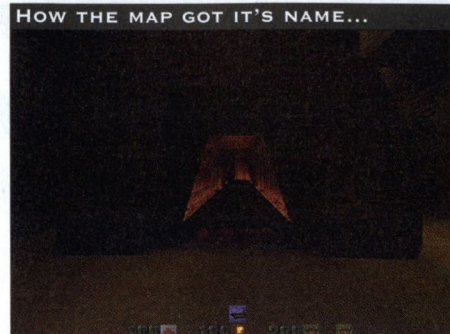


health and is often times the quietest place on the map as many players will grab the railgun and depart for the rocket launcher area. This can also be used to a players advantage when they're travelling through this area with a rocket launcher. The splash damage off the back wall can be enough to hurt most players or push them into the slime. If you possess enough health to survive a rocket jump, then 75% health will be obtainable by rocket jumping to the invulnerability (there is also a railgun to grab). Under most circumstances, you will walk away with approximately 25% more health.

Breathe the map

Navigation in and around the frag pipe is extremely important due to the fact that it is a popular area that adjoins a multitude of rooms via one ladder. Know that slope jumps from the pipe to the super shotgun are possible - learn to counter the oppositions offence. Jump everywhere! Jumping, although a generally important tactic is especially suited to Q2DM3. Try not to focus too much on controlling the quad damage or the invulnerability, as they tend to detract from your ability to control the general items. Make sure you can navigate around the lava and

HOW THE MAP GOT IT'S NAME...



slime comfortably - it's there, but if you don't notice it you'll find yourself falling in on occasions (though if you fall in - ensure that you at least attempt to rocket jump out - the lava is relatively shallow on Q2DM3). Don't be scared of travelling through the frag pipe. If you do get trapped, don't give up so easily! 100 health and 50 armour is all you need to survive by swimming (ie jumping) to the top of the lava.

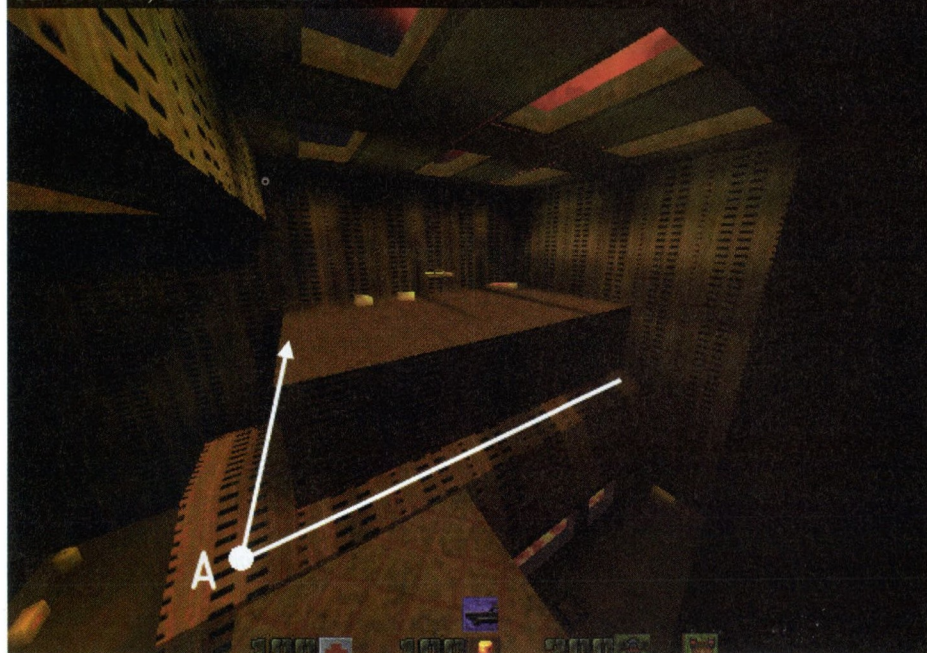
If you know the level structure and how to maintain order, you will reign supreme at the Frag Pipe, and the level will be yours. Players will no longer fear the usual, in-built frag pipe, but the shaft of your weapon and the appearance of your player model. You are the frag machine...

Elih Brading

GETTING THE QUAD



GET SHOTTY, GO POINT BLANK



Q2DM8

~THE WAREHOUSE~

THE FINAL LEVEL EMBEDDED WITHIN THE ID MAP PAK IS AN INDUSTRIAL LEVEL BUILT FOR THE RAILGUN.

Wow.. Like, trippy man. You see it now. Your eyes widen and turn to a fixed focus. You see corkscrews that pierce the contorted corridors, spirals extending from often-perplexed players. Blue with white flecks become a portrait painted against the cubic, inorganic architecture. Its use cannot be condoned - the railgun is a versatile tool and an invaluable addition to your arsenal.

You run down a hallway, look upwards and see someone sniping from the sky. You nail the critter in the head across the expanse of the hallway; he bounces back and attempts to realign. As you strafe to the right, attempting to line up for the exit of your next slug, a BFG-wielding player stocked with a fully-fledged powershield quickly ends your railstorming run. The great thing about q2dm8 is that it contains almost every element of play and caters for a diverse array of techniques and tactics.

Raw power

Perhaps the most imbalanced deathmatch map ever created for Quake2 by id software, q2dm8 provides players with the ability to completely dominate and to totally annihilate. The positioning of items mean that it is simple to stock up to the threshold values in any

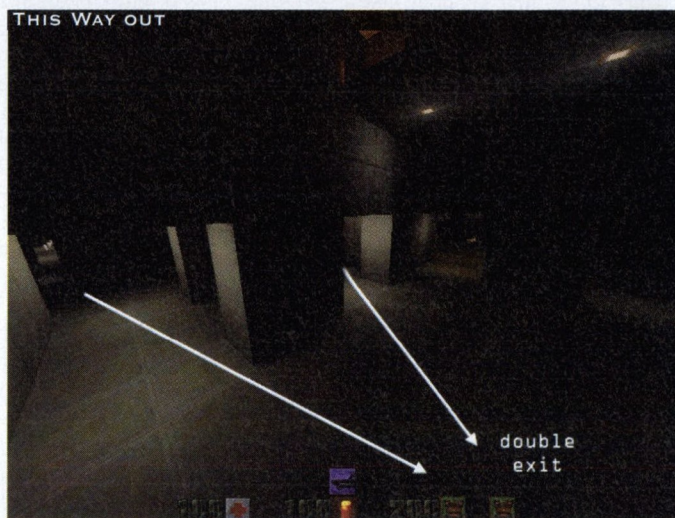
given area. The hyperblaster area contains 150 Cells and Combat Armour; the Railgun area contains 30 slugs. The Central Area contains a chaingun, 200 bullets, a Rocket Launcher, 15 rockets, a Grenade Launcher with 15 grenades, 50% health and the "dark-corner" contains a diverse array to top off whatever you might be carrying (shells, slugs, bullets, health, grenades).

Watch the powershield

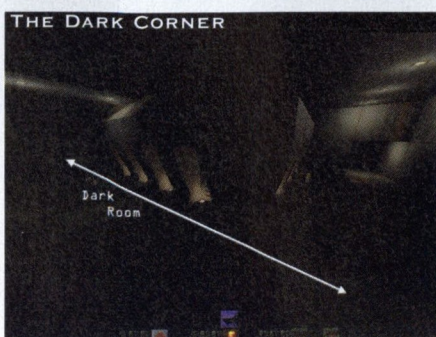
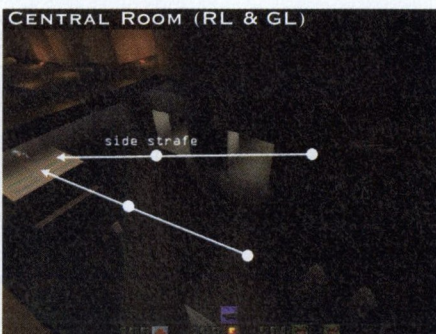
Although there is an abundance of objects, there are certain items and areas that you shouldn't allow your opponents to control or (where possible) even gain access to. The powershield is one such item - it can quickly demolish whatever equality previously existed.

Know your exits

The funnelling architecture of the central room, combined with the enticing effect of

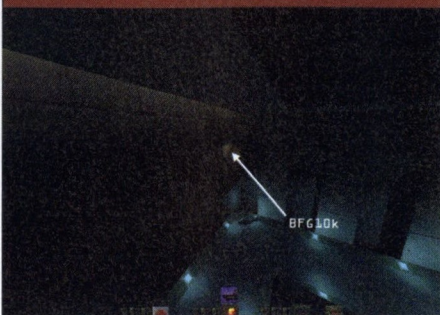


the rocket launcher means that this area will almost always contain the largest percentage of players. Unlike a funnel however, the area contains two exit points (not including the crate jumping technique explained in issue #36). Both exits are equally appealing; one of them contains a wider exit point, but is more popular thus rendering you vulnerable to attack. The thinner exit will have you running through armour shards, thus attracting unwanted attention (though if you stick close to the wall you can avoid them). This direc-



THE BFG10K

The BFG10k is a weapon that is extremely useful on The Warehouse. To obtain it, ride the cargo conveyor-belt from anywhere along the vertical path, then follow the horizontal as far as you can go (which will have you in the back corner of the map, behind the railgun). Here you will find the BFG10k and five grenades. If you're abundant on the health side of things, you could always rocket jump directly there...



1 ON 1 LEVEL GUIDES

HIGH-RISE LIVING. OR NOT LIVING, AS THE CASE MAY BE



tion does incur less traffic, so you may want to take this option when you're looking to avoid confrontation.

Under most circumstances, you will find it useful to do weapon sweeps through this area. Starting with the chaingun and bullets, strafe to the rocket launcher and rocket packs, then use one of the two techniques to grab the grenade launcher and ammo. Then choose an exit and leave the area in search of an engagement.

Appropriate weapons

Due to the openness of most areas, the chaingun and railgun are perhaps the most useful of weapons to be running around with because of their instant hit ability. If you are travelling along the bottom floor, the rocket launcher and BFGrok become useful for their splash-damage factorial (the BFGrok is also good for relatively open areas with plenty-o-players). The narrower corridors mean that there will always be an option for grenade launcher usage - particularly when you are wanting to hold off players, and the rocket launcher is also effective whilst aimed at the walls or floor of the hallway. The super shotgun is almost rendered useless due to the presence of powerups (specifically the powershield) and an abundance of other, more powerful weapons, however it is useful for discouraging pursuers and distorting the screens of powershielded players.

Surprise tactics

The Warehouse is Quake2's answer to inner-city, high rise living and contains an abundance of fire escapes. Often times, during rail duels, you will find players storming in with a chaingun, rocket launcher or super shotgun. Under most circumstances, it is best to leave the room via the nearest exit as more often than not you will incur a slight amount of damage from a weapon that will leave you open to attack from a rail-

gun - or vice versa. As you back away out of the room, keep your crosshair on the door so that you can hit any trackers as they travel through the passage. The step-stone nature of the map ensures that often times you won't fall straight to the ground floor. If you know where each level underlays each other, you will hold tremendous advantage over your opponent. The multi-storeyed nature makes it possible to catch your opponent by surprise because of the awkward positions you can get yourself into. There are many sniping locations scattered throughout Q2DM8 from which you can easily exit if the situation becomes hostile - use them to your advantage.

Cellulicious

If you find yourself being dominated by a player with the powershield or BFGrok, make sure that you attempt to gain control of

POWERSHIELD

The powershield? Never even knew it existed? Now you know where it's located...



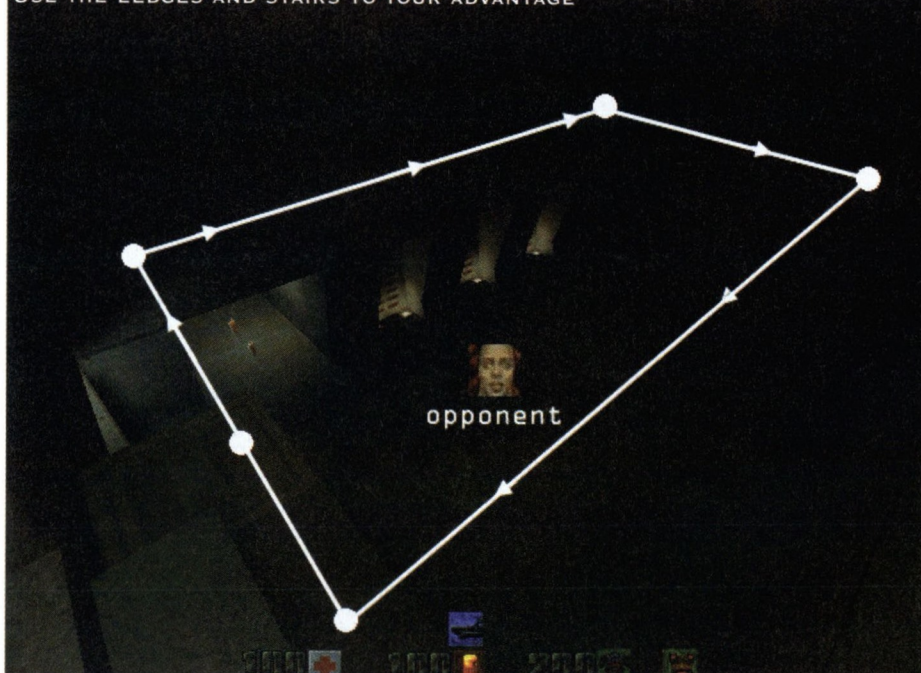
the hyperblaster area. This area is pertinent to anything that requires cells, so control is important in both situations (eg wanting the cells, or looking to steal the cells). If you are successful in guarding the area, you will find that the powershielded player will quickly run dry, thus ensuring that you are both at an equal level for competition.

Words o' wisdom

Above all, no one technique will ever be effective enough to ensure that you are a clear winner. Control of the powershield item (thus body armour/megahealth) will ensure that you have an obvious advantage. Ensure that you are always stocked on ammo for a diverse selection of weaponry, as q2dm8 ensures exponential amounts of weapon changes for multiple situations. Remember, the optimum tool for the job is the railgun and other instant hit weapons. Use the terrain to your advantage, the slopes on the edges of the pathway can propel you great distances - the stairs can be double-jumped up.

Know your level, know your item placements, know your weapon changes and know the terrain: these things equate to success in an industrial world...

USE THE LEDGES AND STAIRS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE



Games. Coke. Pizza. Pals. Perfection.

When you write, remember to include as much pertinent information as possible. Send your CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT and any associated *.INI files for Windows that might tell us more about your problem. Give us as detailed an explanation as you can and be sure to include as much detail as possible about your PC. Feel free to email your questions or, if you want to snail mail, please remember to write clearly or better still, print your letters. Please note that due to the volume of messages we receive, we cannot guarantee a response to your queries.

Setup

PC PowerPlay

78 Renwick St

Redfern

NSW 2016

setup@pcpowerplay.next.com.au

The Modem Man

Q When I went to buy an internal modem the salesman told me that an internal modem is not good for online gaming because it was software based and that it caused high ping. He also said that an external modem was faster and more reliable. Is any of this true? I ended up buying the internal one because I have plenty of

space on my motherboard and because it supports modem wake-up.

The Modem Man

A Well, there are some modems which are 'software' based, but not all internal modems are software based. Yes, a software modem (which still includes a hardware component) such as a Winmodem will slow you down, especially on slower machines, because your CPU is doing what is normally done in hardware. Winmodems are renowned for poor performance and do not come recommended at all. At all costs, keep away from them!

As for your standard trusty modem, internal or external they're basically the same (the internal one just doesn't have a pretty box,



Letter of the Month

Win a **PSI Hercules Dynamite TNT**

Overbearing overclocking?

Q I have heard of overclocking and I understand it is telling your computer to run faster than it is designed to. Your magazine leads me to think that if I have an OK fan in my computer then it will be fine. But I am a little bit confused. I have a 333MHz Celeron A, currently running at 333MHz. Telling it to run faster is surely wearing out something? I mean, if there was absolutely nothing wrong whatsoever with overclocking, then wouldn't the manufacturers just call it a 366MHz Celeron A and set the clock multiplier to 5.5 instead of 5? Or even 6, and call it a 400MHz computer (which sounds really impressive)? Anyway, what I'd like to know is, when I push my computer faster than it's meant to go, what am I wearing out (if anything) and what are the consequences?

Michael Wulfsohn

A This is a really good question. Firstly the reason you can overclock CPUs in the first place is that the manufacturer (such as Intel) has left a 'buffer' zone to ensure stable operation. Sure, a 350MHz CPU may overclock to 400MHz by setting a jumper or a BIOS switch, but can the manufacturer guarantee stability? Not really, especially when you take into account all the possible modifiers that can affect CPU operation. If a CPU doesn't pass a test for a given MHz it's sometimes sold at the next level down — i.e. a 400MHz chip that fails to be stable at 400MHz will likely be fine at 350MHz. If Intel were to sell chips that regularly faulted, customers would soon abandon their product. As a result it's best to play it on the safe side and sell chips which, although they can be operated at a higher MHz, their rated MHz is a level that is guaranteed to be stable. This is also why CPUs from other manufacturers such as IBM don't overclock so well — IBM CPUs are already pressed close to their maximum operating limit, and going any further makes them inoperable. Effectively, such CPUs are 'overclocked' already. Another way of looking at it is that Intel chips are generally 'underclocked' by default whereas IBM CPUs are operating at their maximum stable MHz.

So how come so many people overclock their CPUs and do so successfully? For a start, as stated above, most chips can handle at least a slightly higher rating and not be unstable at all. In reality you can overclock a CPU to any MHz level you want, but the hardware was only designed to operate at a certain level, and bypassing this greatly increases heat to a level the CPU can't

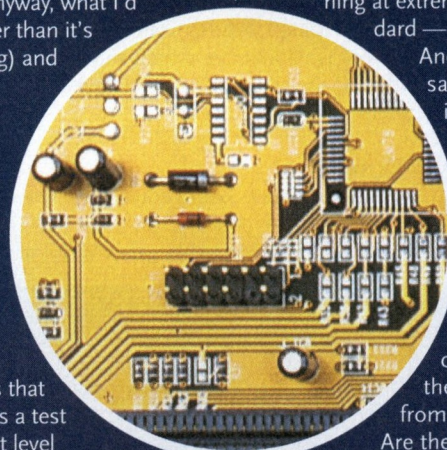
stand. It also requires more power, which is why some overclockers aren't limited by heat, but by voltage. Advanced motherboards allow a user to increase voltage to the CPU in order to supply its demands, and this increased voltage itself will be source of heat.

If your CPU gets too hot, the internals will start to expand, and this will eventually lead to a crash. Hence, the biggest concern when it comes to overclocking is cooling. Generally, you can overclock in direct proportion to the level of cooling you can provide. That's why companies like Intel are able to demo their chips running at extremely high MHz ratings over the current standard — they do so using expensive cooling equipment.

And why are Celerons more overclockable than, say, a standard PII? For the most part, the limiting factor in PII overclocking is not how much heat the CPU can stand before it starts losing data, it's the L2 cache built onto the cartridge. These chips, too, get very hot and they are more susceptible to heat problems than the CPU because most heatsinks (the Intel ones specifically) and fan combos for PII's focus on drawing heat away from the CPU, not its L2 cache. Good heatsink and fan combos will take this into account and cover the L2 cache as well, thereby drawing heat away from the memory chips.

Are there any longterm problems associated with overclocking? Yes indeed. Overclocking will shorten the life of your CPU, there's no doubt about it. Over time, with excessive heating within the CPU, a process known as 'silicon migration' can occur where, quite literally, the silicon in the CPU slowly moves until the thousands of tracks within it are no longer accurately aligned, and errors will start popping up on a regular basis. This type of damage is permanent, and will occur faster in hotter CPUs. The cooler you can keep your CPU, the longer it'll live at its faster rating. Of course, the cooler you can keep it the more you're likely to squeeze out of it, and so your CPU is likely to be excessively hot most of the time anyway, and silicon migration will be accelerated.

It should be noted, however, that even the shortened lifespan of a CPU might be 5 or more years, and given that most people (well, you'd hope all people) upgrade within this time frame, what does it matter if you squeeze more out of your CPU during its life? After all, overclocking is more raw power for free, and as one of PCPP's great mottos states 'If it's free, it's good'.



nice lights, and is mounted on a plug in card). Just a personal recommendation, but avoid internal modems too. Why? For a start it's not easy to see what's going on with it unless you run some software to represent 'modem lights'. The LEDs on modems are very handy to see how your connection is going, when there's no data being sent (lag, for example, can be quickly identified), how fast it's really going (the connection speed) and how well it's working. With an internal modem, you lose most of this. Also, internal modems come with their own serial chips for COM ports for the modem. Great, except these will conflict with those on your motherboard (COM1 and COM2). You can work around it (using COM3 and COM4) but because you can only ever have two COM ports in operation at once, COM1 and COM2 from the motherboard have to share IRQs with COM3 and COM4 from the modem, which can be problematic, especially because most modems won't default to COM3 or COM4, instead they'll be set to COM1 or COM2 and directly conflict with motherboard resources. For example, if you've got a serial mouse plugged into COM1, you can't use COM3 as they both share IRQ 4. COM2 and COM4 share IRQ3. The best way to think of this is that your machine can only ever have two COM ports, and that the COM3/COM4 naming mechanism just lets you connect more devices to your machine, it doesn't let you use them all. Phew, make sense?

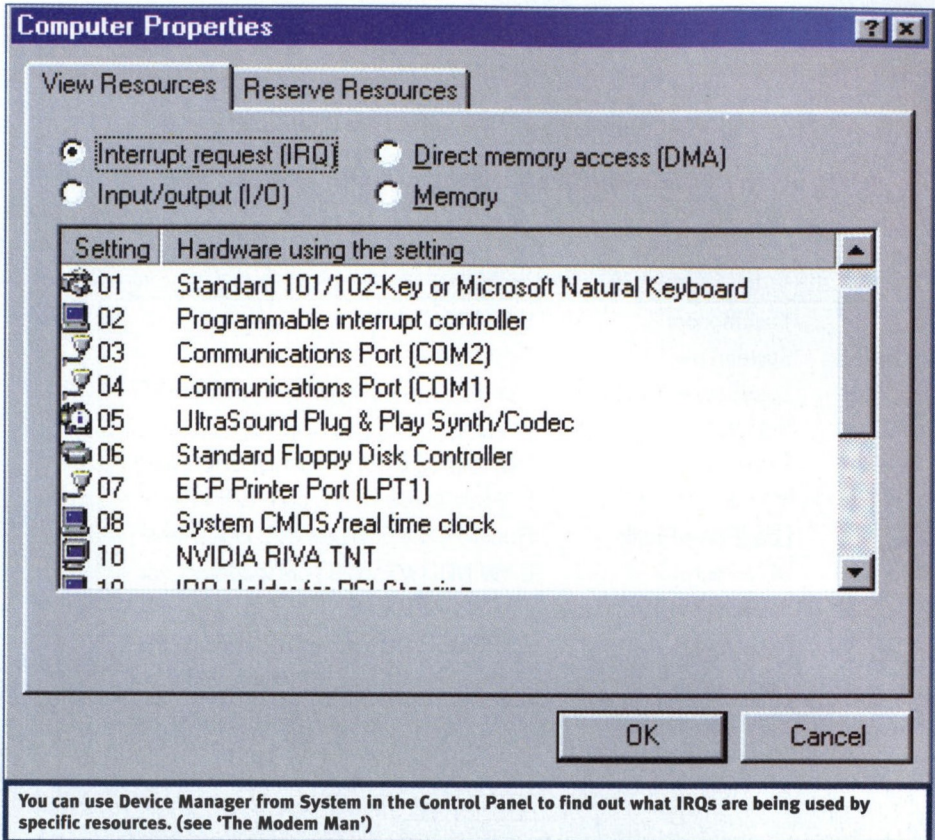
Really, there's no reason NOT to get an external modem. Sure, they can be slightly more expensive, but an internal modem just isn't worth the hassle.

Locked out

Q Your mag is great, I got all of the issues (true). But now I need your help. My new super fantastic computer is broken :(When I load up it asks for a password, I can't do anything not even enter my Bios. I didn't set a password but I might have restored all the default settings (load turbo defaults). It is Award BIOS and it's a P2 350 64mb Ram 6.4Gig. My motherboard is an Aopen AX6BC. I would send you my config etc but my computer is broken remember. Please help me or I will be killed by my mother :)

Adam Rodger

A Easy to fix. You'll need to rip open your PC and find the motherboard manual that came with it. Give it a quick read and you're sure to find a listing of jumpers and what they do. One of them will say something like 'CMOS clear' or 'BIOS erase' or along those lines. You might also see the jumper itself labelled on the motherboard, so take a good look at it. All the jumper does is essentially reset the BIOS for you, and normally involves you changing the jumper, turning your machine on, turning your machine off, changing the jumper back, and turning your machine back on again.



Also, by default, no passwords are installed, so someone has come along and put a password on your BIOS. Maybe your mum wanted you to stop using the PC!

Celeron Correction

Q Hope you don't think I'm a smartass, but I think you may have given one of your readers a wrong bit of advice. Aaron "superdude" Herbert was asking about overclocking his Celeron 300A. You told him to change the multiplier. Unfortunately all Celeron's are multiplier locked. The C266 is locked at 4, the C300 and C300A at 4.5 and the C333 at 5. Just leave the Celeron 300A at 4.5 and change the frequency. My 300A is at 375Mhz(4.5 x 83Mhz) and runs sweet. No extra cooling fans needed. I had it at 4.5 x 100Mhz but it crashed every now and then in games and in 3D Studio Max.

Anyway, love your magazine. I've been buying it every month since it came out. Think I'd better subscribe.

Malcolm Cook

A Not at all Malcolm! Thankyou (and the many other readers) for writing in to correct me on this. It warms my heart to see so many of you taking an active interest in Setup - now I know how many people read this wonderful section!

And yes, you should subscribe :-)

Hot chips

Q Um hey DETECTIVE Ashton. You are my hero! Can you help me? My Pentium 2 has a Monster 3d inside (it's old) and somehow, when I was playing Quake 2, it freezes. I ignored this problem and restarted the computer. I played Quake 2

again. This time it made funny sounds through the sound speaker and froze. I then restarted the computer again and played Quake 2 again. This time it made funny sounds through the speakers heaps LOUD and I then heard this pop! My computer went dead. I feared my computer exploded. I saw smoke come out of the disk drive. I opened the case and smoke was everywhere. I was relieved to see that my expensive Pentium 2 was alright. But the chip in the 3Dfx was blown! I was lucky, very very lucky that this was a gift. For free. Anyway, I think it might be the chip overheating. Please help me solve this mystery... You think it may have something to do with overclocking? P.S. The computer still works w/o the 3dfx.

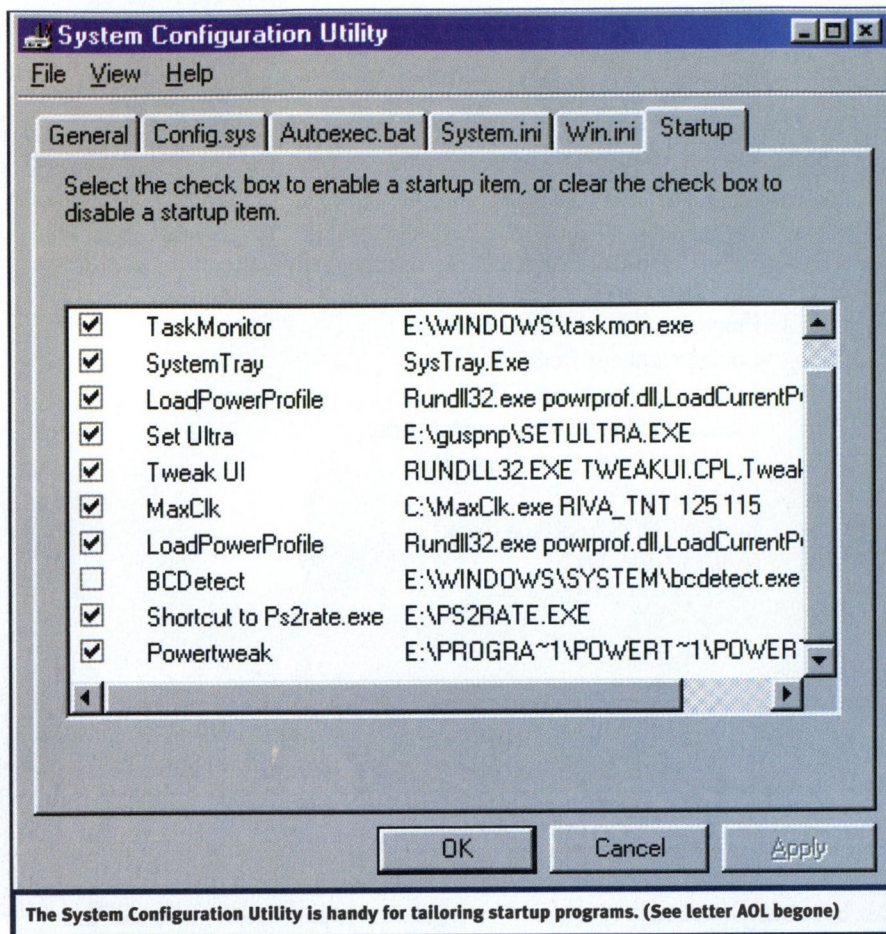
Yun Khang

A Yes, I think it's safe to say it was the chip overheating, and if you've been overclocking it, I think it's safe to say that the reason you have a minced 3Dfx is because it was overclocked to oblivion. Lucky indeed that it was a gift, else you would have wasted your precious cash.

Loyal setup readers, overclocking your video cards is a great way to squeeze more performance out of your system, but like with overclocking your CPU, you NEED cooling. If you don't, expect a hot chip on its way to 3D card heaven. If you're not confident enough to screw, solder or rubberband an extra fan or heatsink/fan combo to your 2D/3D cards, then don't overclock.

AOL begone!

Q I would like to know.....WHY there is a DAMN ADVERTISEMENT in Windows 98....you know the one I'm talking about.....the one that appears



once every few weeks trying to get you to sign up for AOL instant messenger. WELL!? How the hell do I get rid of it? And how do I sue Microsoft for putting it there when I don't really want it there at all that much (I'm sure it's illegal, everything else they do is).

Wallis

A Darn right, highly annoying huh? Just like the way it places 'Online services' link on the desktop when you have no intention of using them! Partners indeed. You can remove it two ways.

Start REGEDIT and drill on down to: **MyComputer\HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\Software\Microsoft\Windows\CurrentVersion\Run** and you'll find a list of programs that are executed everytime you boot up. This is different and in addition to those programs started from your Startup folder. This same list can be accessed by going to Start —> Programs —> Accessories —> System Tools —> System Information, then click Tools —> System Configuration Utility —> Startup. Here you can use checkboxes to select which programs should or should not be started. Take note that some of these are put there by Windows 98 for system maintenance, so don't go unchecking them all, just uncheck the AOL program.

Switching drives

Q I have two hard drives on two computers both running Win98. One hard drive is a 4.3 gig and the other is a 1.6 gig. The 4.3 gig was partitioned into two 2.1 gig hard drive. Now I want to swap

the two hard drives and still have the 4.3 gig partitioned into two 2.1 gig. If I format the two 2.1 gig and put it into another computer would it detect the hard drive as one or two hard drives?

Pakdeethai

A When you partition the information is stored on the drive, so no matter where you take that drive, it will always appear to have two partitions on it to any operating system. If the operating system can understand the file format you've used, you'll also be able to access information on those partitions.

The only thing you need to be careful of is that when you add another drive to your system, the primary partition will push along drive letters for all extended partitions on all the drives you have. So, if you had one drive in your system partitioned as C: and D:, and you add another drive to your system which also has two partitions you'll end up with C: and E: on your first drive and D: and F: on your second drive. Primary partitions are assigned drive letters in order before extended partitions. If you've installed an OS to an extended partition, you'll run into problems when the OS tries to boot and can't find itself where it thought it should be. Don't you love confusing prose like that? This won't affect gamers who have just one OS installed on their first primary partition, but it will affect gamers who multi-boot between OSes and have these OSes on extended partitions.

Tech Tips

Tip type thingies to make your PC stuff go better

More reader tips this month, thanks for everyone who's been sending in their handy hints!

Flashing baby!

Ever had a failed BIOS flashing, and living in Australia trying to get a new BIOS from the motherboard manufacturer is nearly impossible - but there is a solution. Get one of your buddies with the same board to bring it over and rip his BIOS out to boot your machine with and then while the machine is still running take the chip out and replace your own failed chip (sound scary - but its okay the machine only accesses the BIOS itself on boot) and reflash it and ensure you use the correct BIOS and flashing program (the most common cause of such a problem).

Ever had a failed Video BIOS flashing, having a non-removable BIOS is always good fun, there is a solution - and its easy, borrow another Video card (must be PCI and the two cards can't be the same brand or chipset) and boot your machine with it. If the machine had an AGP card previously go in to the BIOS and change the setting which specifies which bus to check first to PCI and then restart the machine with both cards in - if both are PCI ensure the working card is first in the bus, ie closer to PCI1 - doesn't need to be number one just closer to it than the other video card. Then reflash using the correct BIOS, and restart without the borrowed card, you will still need to change the setting back in the BIOS but the machine will boot either way - it'll just save a couple of nanoseconds to check the PCI bus before it checks the AGP bus.

Klamath

Display your own logo

Ever wondered how the heck programmers put their logo and support info in System Information? Now the secret is out!

First use any old graphics program. Change the picture attributes to 160*120 and save it as oemlogo.bmp (C:\windows\System\). There's no certain file size needed!

Now for support info, open notepad and write the following:

[General]

Manufacturer= Your Name/Co

Model= Your model CPU/Computer

[Support Info]

Line1=In the followings lines, write what ever you like!

Line2=" "

Line3=" "

Line4="Ph: "

Line5="Fax: "

Line6="E-mail: "

Then save as oeminfo.ini (C:\windows\System\). Now restart your computer, on the desktop highlight My Computer, then press and hold ALT+ENTER.

Cameron Wilmot

DEMOS OF ALL THE BEST GAMES!!



OUT NOW!

3D TECHNEWS

New graphics technology = better games with new tricks and features.
By Jere Lawrence

It's been a big month for 3D and graphics technology, with the release of a number of very exciting 3rd generation cards. Subsequently, this month's Graphics Tech is going to focus a little more on some upcoming 3D games with a very comprehensive look at the new hardware, as featured on page 26.

Creative Encore 5X DVD drive and DXR2 decoder card

A number of months back we had a look at the Creative DVD kit. Due to a lack of DVD titles to test with, however, we couldn't comment as thoroughly on it as we would have liked. Cue the present, and a vast majority of video stores now carry DVD titles allowing a closer examination of Creative's kit.

The Creative PC DVD 5X encode kit consists of a 5X DVD drive which equates to a 32 speed CD ROM and the Encore DXR2 decoder card. The drive as could be expected works like a normal CD drive except it can read the extended higher density DVD format.

The Creative decoder card is really the focus of this second look, as it's quite an effective device. The DXR2, or 'Encore' card is standard PCI, and like a Voodoo/Voodoo 2 uses a small male-to-male 15 pin monitor plug to receive a signal from the primary video card. Unfortunately, when this is used the overall quality of the display is reduced. However unless you wish to watch DVD video on your desktop unnecessary so you can just plug your monitor into the primary card.

The beauty of the Encore card is in its TV-out abilities. Featuring a dual SVHS/Composite video plug, you simply run it to your TV and you're ready. Now, if you're like me you might have suspected the card outputs the desktop to

the TV and requires the DVD frame to be maximised. Much to my pleasant surprise this isn't the case at all. Instead the Encore card outputs a pure video signal of DVD only. This essentially makes the card identical to a stand alone DVD player.

The quality

Returning from the local video store with *Godzilla* and *The Devil's Own* in hand it was time to test the Encore's output quality to TV. Quite simply, it's fantastic. Trust me, everyone needs a DVD player of some sort, the quality is just absolutely wonderful. In fact it's virtually impossible to go back to a video cassette after observing the pure clarity, depth of colour and brilliant sound that DVD offers. With the Creative Encore card it's also perfectly smooth (jitter free) and fully compatible with off the shelf titles.

Back to the quality and in particular it was *The Devil's Own* that really caught my attention. One particular part of the movie shows scenes of the Irish coastline that were just simply amazing. You could see the subtle rolling of the waves, the lush colours of the surrounding landscape and the light from the windows of small cottages. The lights in the window were particularly impressive as you could clearly see faint changes in colour that made it seem more like a 35mm photo than a video format. *Godzilla* was equally impressive, with tremendous surround sound and the special effects could not have looked any better.

Actually, in some cases the DVD format was so clear that you could quite easily distinguish certain special effects scenes. For example, the scene where the stars are running



from *Godzilla* in the taxi there were moments when you could tell the taxi was a miniature plastic model. A video cassette on the other hand just doesn't offer the clarity to allow you to notice things like this.

DVD - The down side

There's a down side to DVD and it's not Creative's fault at all. DVD is plagued by a ridiculous copy protection method known as region codes. These codes only allow a player to play a DVD title with a matching region code. For example, in Australia we are region code 4, which is what the drive is set to. Were you to purchase an American DVD title off the Internet it would not work on a DVD drive set to the Australian region.

This is not only unacceptable on a consumer level, but also extraordinarily frustrating. There's numerous other superior copy protection methods such as the Sony Playstation's "black bottom". By using a polarised transfer the Playstation drive can determine a titles originality. As a copy would be onto a gold CD without the polarised bottom, it won't run. Likewise, some kind of "bad sector" on a DVD title would have prevented piracy. To limit a persons ability to purchase a product based on what region they live in is wrong.

To that end, for the Creative Encore kit there are programs on

the Internet that allow for the region code to be changed to that of the title. These programs allow you to do this an unlimited number of times as opposed to the 5 time change limit set in the Creative software. As it stands, I would have to encourage anyone with the Creative kit to seek out this software and use it. Region codes, in my opinion, violate our consumer rights. Those interested need only search around www.visualdomain.net for the application. Hint: investigate the remote control application for region code change functionality.

Conclusion

DVD is, quite simply, wonderful. We all need to be upgrading to one of these drives. Even if just a DVD drive is purchased, 3rd generation 3D accelerators are either fast enough, or include DVD playback hardware. For the first time in computer history we have access to a video format that is of higher quality than live transmission/video cassette and can reap the benefits of considerably more data on the CD and exceptional video quality.

If your computer is located nowhere near your main TV, you're better off buying a dedicated player and saving yourself the trouble of moving the PC, or running long cables. This doesn't discount the Creative kit, as DVD is such a wonderful format you will reap the benefits from any game that supports it, which we definitely need more of.



QUICK BYTES

Werewolf: the Apocalypse

3D has come a long, long way since the days of Wolfenstein and thankfully a lot of developers have started to realise that the medium is useful for a lot more than just first person action games. In fact, 3D more than any other kind of rendering style offers the easiest means to mix multiple genres into one. These days it's the Role Playing First Person Action game, which is about the best way to describe Werewolf.

The story starts with your character, a punk sixteen-year-old, hearing a noise. But not just any noise, it's the sound of a creature spewing worms into the boy's mother's mouth. A quick heave later and the boy himself is attacked. Now I bet you can't guess what happens next, well OK you can, the trauma of the situation causes the boy to become a werewolf. Happens to us all doesn't it?

Werewolf is the child of DreamForge Entertainment who last year released the supposedly disturbing Sanitarium. The object of the game is to discover who was responsible for your mother's death, what your long-estranged father has to do with

it, and reveal your role in a world of werewolves. Those familiar with the pen and paper game (ack, dice and all that...) of the same name will be pleased to know that the world is fully derived and licensed from White Wolf, makers of the Werewolf and Vampire RPG worlds.

DreamForge are another to choose the mighty Unreal engine as their creative tool of choice. However, they're also making heavy modifications to it in what will hopefully be one of the more unique interpretations of the engine we've seen.

Morphing

3D is the perfect tool for morphing but as yet hasn't been fully utilised. Thankfully then this technique will be prevalent in Werewolf. As well as the main character being able to morph, NPCs can as well. In the Werewolf universe, there are three states of being that are available to those with werewolf genes.

The first is the simple human state.

The second is that of Crinos the wolfman, a huge bipedal monstrosity with large sharp claws who can also use the Klaive (ceremonial werewolf sword). Crinos also has the ability to cast magical Gifts or spells and regenerate damage. Finally, there is Lupus, the wolf. Small and fast with tracking capabilities, this incarnation has the ability to squeeze into smaller, tighter spaces.

Morphing takes place in real-time via a beautifully designed algorithmic mapping system. You might leap into the air as Crinos, and land as Lupus - which is required in certain situations.

As the game focuses heavily on melee combat, a new camera methodology was required and



DreamForge have responded with a technique they're calling "Z-Lock".

Says Executive Producer Travis Williams "The name is almost misleading. Z-Lock literally means to lock the Z-axis onto a target. Now in first person mode, the Z-axis is traditionally pointing into and out of the middle of your monitor, thus the name. Of course we are in a first and third person game here, but the name stuck. What it means to us is a targeting system very much like that seen in Zelda."

There will be 28 levels in the four-chapter game, which will take you from England, Greece, the U.S. and to the Umbra. The Umbra is reached by side-stepping into another dimension, so it's "anything goes" for the level designers.

Another interesting level is called "the belly of the worm" (worms feature predominantly in this game). The Wurm is the Bad Thing that is causing the world's apocalypse, and it has servants called Thunderworms. These are huge Dune-style worms and you





will be lucky enough to romp through the innards of one.

Interestingly, a fifth chapter was intended, a Mexican rain forest. But while we all thought that the Unreal engine was great for outdoor areas, it was soon discovered that the Unreal engine is great only for sparse outdoor areas, not detailed ones.

Finally, the RPG elements of the game will come from the awarding of "Glory points" which are comparable to "experience points" in traditional RPGs. Some of the gifts you can choose from are Razor Claws, Speed of Thought and Resist Pain. Other gifts such as Frenzy and Infestation are cast like offensive spells and are easily as dazzling as Heretic II's spells.

Obviously how you spend your Glory will determine what kind of character Ryan evolves into by the end of the game. Folk who spend all of their points on permanent gifts create a stronger character for melee combat, while those who choose activated gifts will be more "sorcerer-like." There is as yet no confirmed release date for Werewolf.

Nocturne

Those that have played Resident Evil 1 or 2 could be forgiven for thinking that Nocturne was just another clone of the genre. Far from it, Nocturne is an exciting 3rd person action adventure in schlock horror style.

It's the action, graphics, physics and AI that make Nocturne special. Upon starting the game you observe the main character shooting the head off one of the oncoming undead, the severed noggin hitting the ground and bouncing with "frightening" realism. Continue on and a horde of zombies and ghouls descend upon the hero

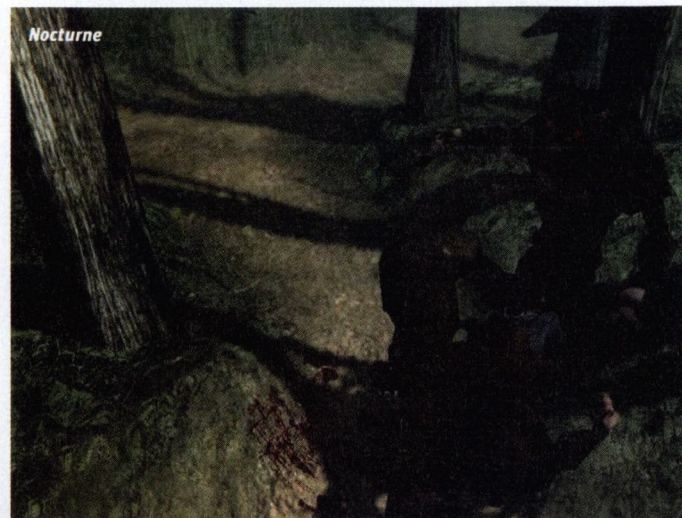
amusingly clubbing him with their own severed limbs. Die and they all gather round to feast on your guts.

Similar to Nightmare Creatures, gamers can play as one of two characters: A Crow style over-coat wearing slayer of evil, or a female scientific genius (don't all female geniuses hunt evil?). Having not seen her yet, the question remains on what this genius lass will be wearing. Odds on she'll be scantily clad, or wearing a sweater so tight it'd cause her appendages to drop off. Other SpookHouse agents will feature as NPCs that can assist in the solving of puzzles and killing of monsters.

Adversaries come directly from the world of horror. Snarling werewolves, vampires, vampire brides (most likely topless), mindless zombies, and entrail-munching ghouls. The AI for the zombies is particularly impressive. Zombies attack in enormous packs and will pick up the limbs of their fallen comrades to bludgeon you to death with.

In Nocturne, the best way is the goriest way. A situation might involve a monster guarding a key near a giant swinging blade. Instead of wasting precious ammo trying to kill the beast, lure him into the blade instead.

Nocturne's rendering engine has been developed in-house and as is the norm these days features a skeletal animation system for smooth, lifelike character movement. Reports so far are that the engine's dynam-



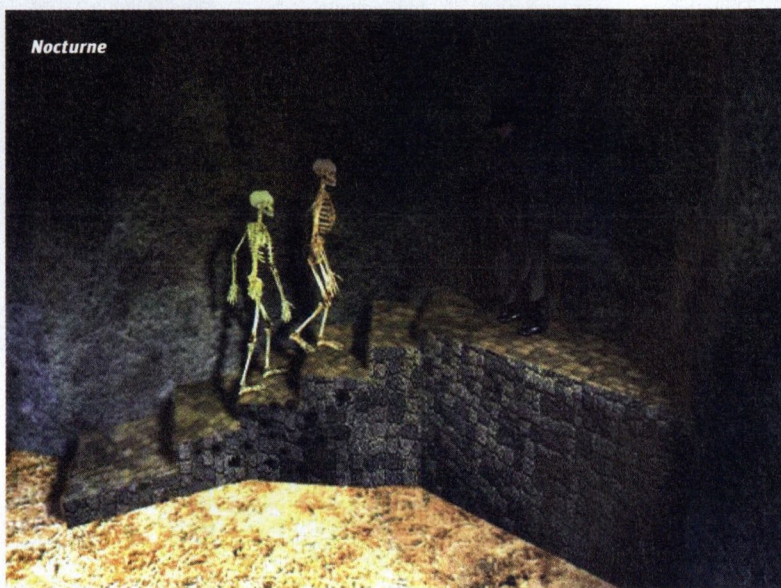
ic physics mean that characters look and move like real humans - no more Tomb Raider-esque 10-foot back flips from a dead standstill.

Other features of the 3D engine include 32 bit colour for 64 billion colours (as opposed to 24 bits 16.7 million. 3dfx - what was that about 32 bit being irrelevant?). Even more exciting, true volumetric fogging allows characters to hide in fog banks rolling off a pier, or in a foggy corner.

Volumetric lighting is used over specular lighting and offers the advantage of casting real shadows (we're getting closer to real time ray tracing) on the characters and environments in the game.



Even more exciting is the 3D engine's ability to render clothing. Not to poo-poo Max Payne, but where it uses an extended skeletal animation system to render his overcoat, Terminal Reality has gone to the trouble of creating a cloth-modelling program for the game. This allows cloth objects to move independently from the characters in the game. Coats flutter when trailing a moving character, whip above the character's head when they fall in a pit, or hug characters' calves as they step backward. Heavy curtains are similarly modelled, falling and swaying believably when characters step through them into hidden vestibules. This is a game engine that positively screams licensing opportunity. Nocturne is due for release on, wait for it, Halloween this year.



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Net Game News

It just keeps getting better and better



CAVEDOG - BONEYARDS

<http://www.cavedog.com>

You relentlessly play your favourite RTS game online against other people. You frequent chat rooms in the hope of finding a worthy opponent. You start your game, and for the next hour or so (often more), you revel in a fantastic battle of skill. If you happen to be the victor, there's the chance of gaining some recognition through a ranking system (if that particular multiplayer service supports one). Then you do it all over again, and love every minute of it.

It's the way things have been done in the world of multiplayer RTS games. But not for much longer. The way the multiplayer RTS game is played is about to change. Keep calm people. This is the next big thing.

Cavedog, makers of Total Annihilation and the soon to be released TA - Kingdoms have presented the online gaming community with perhaps the most exciting innovation yet. The idea is of Cavedog's Boneyards is much like Blizzard's battle.net. It's a free online service, designed to be a place where players from all over the world can meet to take each other on in mass simulated warfare. That's where the similarities end though. Boneyard instead presents a *persistent* gaming universe to play in. Rather than individual, isolated games, players (in the case of playing Total Annihilation, for example) join either The Arm or The Core and take part in a continual, persistent, war. These wars will be set in



sectors containing 50-70 planets, with planets equally distributed between the two sides at the beginning of the conflict. Where the territories meet, battles are set to ensue. The ultimate aim is quite obviously, to capture the opposition's home world.

The implications of such a gaming environment are exceptionally exciting.

Games played on Boneyards now have consequences.

You're not just fighting for a top spot on the league ladder - you're fighting for a cause.

From this, Boneyards, in a very clever way, turns the simple multiplayer RTS into a mega player game, without the need for a new engine. While individual games will continue to have a comparatively low player limit, they become the focus of a huge group of gamers. This is because each territory counts. While it may be just you against the enemy, all your comrades will be aware of your successes and failures. Players will no doubt form forums through which strategies can be discussed, learned and practiced.

The ladder system could be expressed in a much more appropriate manner - novice gamers can squabble over outer rim planets, while the more experienced and skilled commanders would be called in to contest key strategic sectors.

As the war progresses, Cavedog will update the battle map daily and report news from the front to ensure players are kept well informed, and can plan future strategies.

Boneyards will also support TA Kingdoms out of the box, as well as future Cavedog titles. It's currently in beta testing and should be released any time soon. Considering just how excited we are about Boneyards, expect a lot more on this soon.

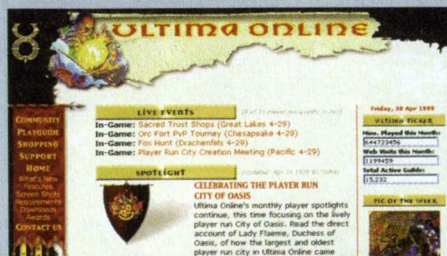


EVERQUEST

<http://www.everquest.com>

Ahh.. It's about time UO had some competition. We here at PCPP finally got our copy just as we were about to head off for E3, so expect a review, as well as news on a local servers and a release (if any) when we get back.

Meanwhile, EverQuest is receiving loads of accolades for its twist on the online RPG. Players are responding well, with strong player communities springing up all over the many EQ shards. Speaking of the 20+ shards - things would be so much easier on us all if only they had pronounceable names!



ULTIMA ONLINE

<http://www.owo.com>

We just love UO. And for good reason too - the development team continue to enhance the overall experience, while deftly addressing those problems that arise as the game continues to evolve.

Recently introduced was treasure hunting in Britannia. On random corpses, the fearless adventurer could find a stained and battered map. Requiring a skilled cartographer to make sense of the directions, the map would lead to a stronghold guarded by packs of monsters. The prize - treasure! Just in case there are some greedy master cartographers out there hoping to claim all the loot themselves, know this - treasure hunting requires teamwork. Besting the guardians of treasure isn't easy.

Origin have also made The Abyss shard a much more permanent one. Watch closely to see as new rules are applied to it - all in the name of fleshing out and providing new types gameplay.

Last but not least is the revamping of the UO home page - or in particular, a specific aspect of it. Located at the top right of the UO home page menu bar, is a section called the "Ultima Ticker". It's a trivial affair, but a damn *cool* one at that. The section reveals the total number of minutes played in UO for that month, and the number of UO home page visits made during the current month. The amusing thing about this though, is that



both the web page visits and the minutes played counters are updated in real time. So it's possible to observe over 300 minutes added to the tally almost every second, which is impressive which ever way you look at it. As a matter of curiosity, UO players clock over 100 million minutes (1.6 million hours, if you prefer) of game time in total a week.

The most notable things currently in testing are:

- Extending the duration of the agility and

strength potions. This will make these potions more viable to the masses, rather than the peculiars of a select few. About bloody time too.

- House deeds to remain in your inventory, even as a ghost. This means they can't be looted once killed, which should ease the burden on deed-holders currently in UO.
- On screen spam associated with skills and actions to be reduced. The next phase in ensuring your UO game screen doesn't look like an X'mas tree.
- The chance to be poisoned by Britannia's monsters to be reduced.
- Various (and numerous) changes to the various skills:
 - animal lore & animal taming
 - cooking
 - fishing
 - healing
 - magery
 - tailoring
 - tinkering



QUAKECON 99
The Best Multiplayer Gaming Event

About QuakeCon 99

Conceived in early 1996, QuakeCon is the branched old Software game. Fans. Their goal was to make QuakeCon an event to:

- Meet prize hands in real life
- Meet the people who make the games
- Talk shop with aspiring and veteran developers
- Deathmatch on a LAN with the best multiplayer games

The mission for QuakeCon has been and continues to be all these things and more.

The first QuakeCon was held in 1996 at the La Quinta Inn in Glendale, TX (a short drive to id's headquarters in Mesquite, TX). The event was organized by EFNat ID, Quake channel operators and, as news of the

QUAKE 3 ARENA
NEWS QUIZ SCREENSHOTS

Now Available
4.26.1999
DATE RELEASED
4.26.1999

I Want My Q3TEST!

Q3TEST GAME SERVERS

This game is not yet rated by the ESRB. It contains animated violence and blood.



QUAKECON

<http://www.quakecon.org>

It's back, and this year, it's going to include Quake 3 in the competition. But the most impressive thing about the id Software-sponsored Quake LAN? That this year, attendants will pass the 1000 mark. We'd be flabbergasted though if they could manage 1000 people per game.

QUAKE 3 - ARENA

<http://www.quake3arena.com>

In further Quake news, id Software released the much anticipated Quake 3 Arena Test during late April. Needless to say, all work stopped at the PowerPlay office as soon as we downloaded it onto our systems. Although the test is but a basic husk of what the game has to offer, we still liked what we played. The catch - you needed to be the proud owner of a G3 Mac to be able to play the game. In a surprise move, id released the Mac version before all others. A few days after the Mac release, id released



Quick Poll

Quake 3 Arena Test is out and has taken the online scene by storm. But just how revolutionary is it? Was it everything you expected, or a bit of a let down?

This month we ask "After playing the Q3A Test, how promising does Quake 3 Arena seem? Very, moderately, or hardly?". Email your answers to ngn@pcpowerplay.next.com.au. Results to be published in Issue #40.



By the time you are reading this, there should be plenty of Quake 3 servers up and running. Also look out for Quake 3 Gamespy support

the Linux version. At time of press, the Windows (PC) version was yet to be delivered. Check pages 36-38 for a more in depth look at Quake 3 Arena.

EIDOSNET

<http://www.eidosnet.com>

Eidos have launched their own answer to Blizzard's battle.net, called Eidosnet. It's free and it'll allow you to play your favourite Eidos multiplayer games online. Eidosnet also includes "free of subscription" internet access, 20MB of personal web-space, multiple email addresses, V.90 or ISDN access, a news service and technical support. Before you pass out from excitement, it should be noted that this service is exclusive to the UK where local calls are timed.

TOP 5 MULTIPLAYER GAMES

1. Half-life
2. Starsiege Tribes
3. Quake 3 (hmmm...)
4. Quake 2
5. StarCraft

To cast your vote, email ngn@pcpowerplay.next.com.au with your favourite online game

HOTTEST TC/MOD OF THE MONTH

Decay

Developer/s: Hanzo

Game engine: Heretic II

Available: Now (beta)

Size: Approx 394K

WWW: www.tudish.com/milclan/decay.html

Decay is the first known mod available for Heretic II.

Rules of Decay

1. Everyone starts at 50 health and loses 1 health per second.
 2. Players must struggle to keep their health up while defending themselves against other players.
 3. Successful attacks to opponents cause your health to increase (a la vampire).
 4. If a player successfully reaches the maximum health set by the server (666 by default), that player will cause GENOCIDE and all opponents will die instantly for a bonus score.
 5. Players are now warned when another player is approaching GENOCIDE.
- While it may sound very simple, decay is fast, furious, and lots of fun. Check it out.



- Your Source For All Your Australian Gaming News & Information

GAMERS AUS-1

STAR CRAFT

DIABLO

NEWS

- News
- Files
- Links
- Forum
- Tournament
- Clan Conclave

Welcome to the new and improved AUS-1 website. Unfortunately, due to factors completely beyond our control, we are unable to at this stage offer all of the features we described in the lead-up to the release. Forced to choose between releasing the whole new layout in what could be a couple of weeks, and putting up what is complete, we chose to the new layout as you now see it.

Eidos however, plan to give access to Eidosnet to the rest of the world sometime in the near future, minus the free internet access of course.

Player submitted site of the month

GAMERS AUS-1

<http://aus-1.golsyd.net.au/>

Sent in by: Matt "Rob Zombie [SF]" Blah

This is a fantastic site dedicated to providing comprehensive information on Blizzard multiplayer gaming in Australia (though general multiplayer gaming issues are also covered). Providing a healthy set of files, links and discussion forums, Gamers Aus-1 speciality is in organising StarCraft multiplayer tournaments. If you're a Blizzard fan and live in Aus, you have to check this one out.

FURTHER LINKS

MPU - <http://www.mpu.com.au/>

ACGP - <http://www.acpg.com.au/>

Multiplay - <http://www.multipplay.com.au/>

Wireplay - <http://www.wireplay.com.au/>

Current Game Versions

Quake 2 - 3.21*

Half-Life - 1.0.0.9*

Unreal - 2.24r*

Sin - 1.03

Shogo - 2.2

Starsiege Tribes - 1.03

* changed in last month

Essential Online Gaming Files

mIRC - <http://www.mirc.co.uk>

ICQ - <http://www.icq.com>

Gamespy - <http://www.gamespy.com>

WEBSTALK

The World Wide Web according to Spooney

SITE OF THE MONTH

HALF-LIFE.ORG

www.half-life.org

Half-Life is probably the biggest First Person game around at the moment and Half-Life.org is the biggest site for it. It obviously follows the general quake news site format which has been tried and tested for years now but does it in style, and is definitely the undisputed leader in Half-Life news. Hosting is another big thing Half Life.org offers, and there are now several great sites under its wing. Along with news Half Life.org has plenty of chat rooms message boards and other community aspects. To go with this are FAQs and other features lists which would definitely be handy for a new player. Basically, Half Life.org is the definitive Half Life site. Go there, now.

Site Design: ★★★★★

Content: ★★★★★



JONNY'S MOBILE PHONE TUNE TIME

www.uk-image.net/mobile/index.htm

This site will allow you to totally wreak havoc on all your friends as well as enemies too. I love this site. Basically it teaches you to play songs on your phone by pressing the numbers in a special order, and it's great. Why didn't I think of this? Someone has even worked out how to play the Power Rangers theme. You can even post your own songs. This is a fantastic site for when you're really



bored and have nothing better to do, ring someone up, and annoy the crap out of them. It's great! Design is standard, and it's only a small site so there's no chance you'll get lost. I applaud this site for its different content and give it the PC PowerPlay stamp of originality. (Sent by Grimace)

Site Design: ★★★★★

Content: ★★★★★

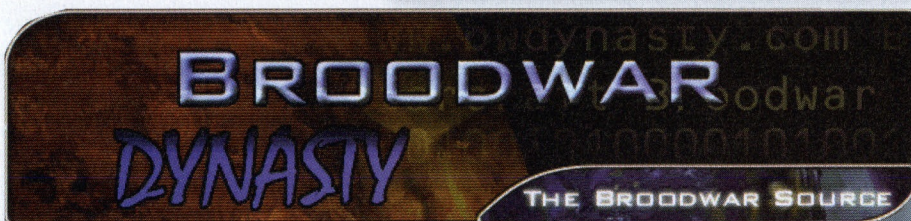
SLUGGY FREELANCE

www.sluggy.com

We've had several requests for more net comics so here is another one. Sluggy is a really funny comic done by a guy named Pete Abrams. He's been doing it since the 25th of August 1997 so there is quite a backlog of really funny material to view if you've never been there before. What can you really say about a comic? This one's a bit like Asterix online. Nothing could really beat that now could it? (Sent by Trent Yarwood)

Site Design: ★★★★★

Content: ★★★★★



THE NECRID EXPANSE - STARTREK VOYAGER

startrekvoyager.findhere.com/

This is the first of our readers submissions and was created by Chris Morris. If you're into Star Trek I'm sure you'll really love this site. It's got heaps of stuff relating to the Voyager series including descriptions of just about everything Voyager as well as movies and many other things which Trekkies will find interesting. Basically the layout is pretty standard, but you can see that quite some work has gone into the images and this site is not just a hack job for some school assignment. Well done Chris, we'll feature another readers site next month.

BROOD WAR DYNASTY

www.bwdynasty.com

Brood War is probably the most successful mission pack ever, and Brood War Dynasty is the place to be to keep up with all the news, reviews and extra bits you won't find anywhere else. BWDynasty just has so much to offer a Brood War player its unbelievable. They have everything you could ever want to do with Brood War. Forums, FAQs, unit listing, extensive download areas, screenshots, and loads of news every day. This should be the first port of call for any Starcraft enthusiast, without a doubt.

Site Design: ★★★★★

Content: ★★★★★

Rod "Spoonman" Campbell
spoonman@next.com.au
<http://surf.to/spooney>

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Voodoo person

Since the Voodoo 3's choice of 16-bit colour will be the next source of major debate (32-bit visual quality vs 16-bit speed), I thought I'd get in early. It looks like 3dfx have an interesting problem here. With many games moving into high quality contemplative atmosphere rather than incessant pulse pounding speed, the games they are a changing.

I am not putting down pulse pounding speed monsters such as Quake and race sims that rely on an amazingly high fps to maintain the illusion of heart wrenching speed. I love 'em. But many games now rely on different factors. Games such as Half-Life, or Thief, or many flight sims look simply amazing with more colours. These help to enhance the gameplay and general atmosphere because they rely on different qualities than mere speed.

A high fps is of course helpful, especially in action sequences, but it comes down to a question of which is more important to a gamer - especially those gamers 3dfx are targeting with the Voodoo 3. In my opinion, a 2D/3D card is inherently going to be less of an inviting prospect for the dedicated gamer (especially those aiming for higher speeds) than the prospect of having two cards. So far the choice of a single Voodoo 3 is far less promising than a Banshee/RivaTNT and Voodoo 2 combo. In my experience, wouldn't the combo offer a far better gaming experience (especially if using a Riva?). I would rather the two-card combo than the single card. With this combo, gaming goodness is achieved, so why the Voodoo 3? Especially if it is a 2D/3D combo without a matching dedicated 3D card.

Gaming has progressed beyond the incessant need for speed. Some game engines pump out prodigious power on relatively small machines (eg. Powerslide's Difference engine). Quake 3 is another case. Those amazing textures and lighting effects. Would you rather have them in 16-bit or 32-bit? Or even 24-bit colour? Since Quake 3 has moved onto the higher ground of visual quality, the main target market for Voodoo 3's

16-bit speed heaven looks to be favouring their competitors, which offer better colour choices! It seems as if 3dfx have shot themselves in the foot here...at least on current info. Tell me if and why I'm wrong, but I'm going to buy a Voodoo 2 to support my Banshee, rather than get a Voodoo 3 (plus, Voodoo 2 prices will hopefully drop with the release of the Voodoo 3).

Chinga Email

You're describing a gaming 'Dream Machine' Chinga - but one that's recently been rendered obsolete. TNT2 - a combo card, outperforms everything else out there, delivering visual quality and speed with no compromise. Yes, we love it. Check out the feature this month for the big picture on this truly exciting new age of gaming.

MacArena

Congratulations must be handed to id software. No, not because they are one of the best games companies in the world, but because they showed us that the Macintosh is a good gaming platform. I am, of course, referring to the Quake 3 demo they showed off. Let's look at it from id's point of view. They make games. To make successful games, one of the things you need to do is to distribute them on a viable platform. Lately, this has been PC, Playstation and the N64. id have seen that the Macintosh is a viable platform and they will be distributing the game on Macintosh. This doesn't mean they will leave behind us PC users any time soon. All it means is that the Macintosh will finally be getting the attention it deserves.

On a final note, to all you readers out there who are going to send in a letter saying the Macintosh sucks etc., DON'T! You won't only piss me off, but you will also piss off every sensible PowerPlay reader and the staff at PowerPlay as well. That is all I have to say at the moment.

Ethan Watson Email

Thanks Ethan, logic and common sense at work, lovely stuff. While we do agree that the Rage 128 powered Mac G3 is indeed a feasible platform for the 4-5 commercially available games it can run, we'd be cool about any Mac-dumping.



JOLT COLA LETTER OF THE MONTH
A CASE OF THE GOOD STUFF FOR THE LETTER
THAT SAYS IT BEST

Ohmigod! They killed Bambi!

There's one thing that bugs me, and it bugs me a lot. Every deer hunter style game that ever makes it into the open gets degraded, abused and tortured by you guys. "Ohhhh those poor little deer" you say, "those innocent, helpless little animals getting their butts blown to smithereens by some psycho hunter (or should that be serial killer)". Now, to me, that attitude sucks! You've got sicko games like Carmageddon where basically it's your objective to drive along, running down pedestrians in the most stylish way possible. Then you've got Postal in which you must walk around slaughtering innocents with a large array of weapons. After you've mown a few people down, and half dead that they are, they cry out "I can't breathe" and "kill me now". How the heck can you call this good fun, yet disgrace those hunting games that don't even register on the same scale.

Let's look at a picture: You've got Carmageddon, where you motor around motoring down innocent humans. Then you've got Deer Hunter, where you shoot the odd animal. Is running people over a sport and is it legal in society? No, a big fat no. Is going out into the country side and shooting at deer (providing you've got a license) a sport and is it legal, hmmm let's see, ummmmm yes. So stop treading on hunters and their little games, before hunters start treading on yours. Apart from that, well, I still love ya mag!

Stephen Schulz New Zealand

Quite right. That was just a phase we went through - experimenting with righteous environmentalism. We're over that. What bothers us now is the inhumane treatment of hostile aliens. Sure, they're not furry or delicious, but aliens are people too!

I play alone

Let us ponder a moment multiplayer gaming... Remember the fun days of sitting on one side of the computer with a friend or relative on the other end of the keyboard or maybe even on the joystick and bashing away at the keys trying to beat your human competition. Remember playing games like Mortal Kombat, or the split screen antics of Whacky Wheels? Now, may I ask what the hell happened to them? I mean I am all for the idea of having games these days with multiplayer components allowing internet play, serial link up play and what have you but when it gets to the stage that a game comes out with these as the only options for game play what has the gaming world really come to?

I, of course, am mainly talking about Quake 3 but after reading issue 34 it seems AFL 99 is almost just as bad. Playing against the computer is how we all began our gaming days, it was fun, challenging and of course meant that we didn't have to find that extra someone to play against us in Monopoly again. Now we require twice the amount of money to buy two computers so that we can play a game with some human interaction or if we can't

afford that our next option is to buy a modem and internet access and suffer the effects of slow, jolty game play. No thank you. Quake 3 takes the cake as the most ludicrous marketing idea ever, how can you possibly make a game that has absolutely no single player component? It just doesn't make sense! I will agree that multiplayer Quake is very enjoyable but when you can't find friends to join you where do you go? Well in the old days you just load up the game in single player mode... Well with Quake 3 you are going to be left all alone with nothing but a blank monitor and a fire in your belly to go out and destroy things. Then we have the other side of things with AFL 99 and its lack of multiplayer... This too is quite foolish, though decidedly less so than Quake 3.

The road to the future lies ahead and when we come to the intersection with one road facing multiplayer only games or single player games with multiplayer options. I know which way I'll be heading.

Christopher O'Connor Email

id claim that Q3A will offer the single-player a worthy experience, so stay tuned for the review ("when it's done, dude") to discover whether or not

that's utter bollocks or gaming's unified theory realised.

Modem man

I love the Internet. Is good. Is fun. Is big. I would also be about the 1 millionth person to admit that it has revolutionised the way we play our games. The Internet has given gamers the ability to frag, conquer, race and generally pummel anyone, anytime, anywhere. It's that easy. However, for the likes of the average net user, there is one major problem, the dreaded "L-word" (I don't think I need to say it, anyone who has seen it will know what I mean).

There is one solution; get Cable modems and T1 links. However, failing that everyone has that much money to burn, there is another way to cure the craving with minimum lag: the direct modem connection. Back in the good old days, we dialled into our mates' computers for our fix of gaming goodness. There was no lag. There was no Internet fee. There was no fuss.

Admittedly, there were only the two of you, but that didn't matter, it just made it more personal =). Something I hope to see in the new batch of 3D games is this option; after all, it isn't difficult to add, nor does it make the game slower or bigger! If Jedi Knight can do it, if Doom, Duke3D and Heretic can do it, then so can the developers of today! It's not too late! Repent while you can! This may not seem like such a big deal to some, but I'm sure a lot more gameplay is to be had with the inclusion of a direct modem function; after all, if game companies don't listen to the gamers, who do they listen to? Hopefully they're reading this right now - that would be sweet.

Lachlan Harrison-Smith
Email

Many new games do support modem-modem play, but sadly you're right - they are on the decline in favour of the all-conquering internet (yay!). "No fuss" you say? Some of our deepest gaming pain came from years' worth of trying to set up modem-modem games. Lest we forget, eh?

Gaming morality

I contemplated beginning this letter by using words that would be classified as insulting, blatant,

mundane and in need of lots of those silly little asterisk symbols (*) instead of the actual characters. But no. Instead, I shall try to represent a completely sane and socially acceptable guy who is normal in every way. Here goes. After reading Mr Mansill's editorial in issue 34, I announced to my nearest associate who happened to be my dog at the time that I was in undiminished understanding and complete agreement with what I had just read. All these 'moralists' who are jumping up with a rapidity that would make even the great MJ jealous are plainly & very obviously way out of their league and are in definite need to be put in their place. A fine example of their complete irrationality and incompetence towards sagacious reason is the enlightened Cam Elkins (issue 32) who claims he isn't happy with games that are being designed for gamers merely to have fun. Elkins and many freaks like him seem to have developed the ridiculous desire for an underlying moral to the story kinda thing. Well pardon me if you happen to disagree with my reasoning and please feel free to give me a stiff white coat and take me to that nice new building out of town with the free padded rooms; but isn't a game something that you can sit down at and entertain yourself by simply playing the thing for a few (or many, for that matter) hours?

The 5th edition of the Heinemann Australian Dictionary states a game as being a form of sport or amusement, especially one with rules. Dare I say that could it perhaps even be possible that computer games are in fact a form of amusement? They could even be classified as having rules. For example, in Quake II, if you jump off tall buildings, you get hurt. If you decide to get a close look at what happens when you fire a projectile into an explosive barrel, you get hurt even more. And if you take too much of a liking to eating HyperBlaster shells and BFG blasts, you get killed. Simple. In a nutshell, adding underlying moral storylines or storylines with some kind of message that the creators draft into their games (you know; the ones that nobody ever really gets anyway) in the hope that it will change the world as we know it, is comically absurd. A game is just a

game. How violent (etc) it is, is irrelevant, as that is what the classifications are put there for. It's just the same for new movies if they're really violent, they're rated appropriately. Gamers play games for fun & entertainment, not to be bothered with philosophical crap. Anyone including our big girls blouse friend, Cam Elkins, who obviously shares remarkable similarities with a single celled amoeba who disagrees should be squashed by Bobo the Clown and then consequently eaten when mistaken for a free giant multicoloured pancake.

Adam South
Brisbane

PS It's 1:37am on Thursday morning so I'm allowed to be snitchey, so neer!

And this is the forum for snitching. Snitch away!

Motorbikes vs Computers

I'm sick of people complaining about how expensive upgrading and buying computers and computer games is! What about motorbikes? Have you considered how expensive and dangerous motorbikes are? A friend of mine spent \$80 because his inner tube was destroyed (for the 20th time) and a sprocket was bent. He ruined his bike in just half an hour and had to spend 2 hours fixing it.

Sure, online gaming may be expensive at times but it is just as fun and you won't regret that little crash that will plague you for the rest of your life. If you don't want to play the computer or ride a bike etc, you can always read a novel! It's cheaper.

Allan & Rhona Parker-Benton
Email

Yes, yes indeed. We wonder why we'd never thought of it that way before...

In response to 'I'm not a geek!' (PCPP #36), I found your letter... disturbing. A person can be fat or thin, or in between, and this has nothing to do with whether a) they are geeks; b) whether they are total dickheads like you; or c) they are normal. And yes, I am one of those geeks who are fat and get beaten up daily by dickheads with IQs of 10, and whose personal hygienic habits leave a lot to be desired. And yes, I sit around and I have no

social life, but if having a social life is hanging around seedy bars getting drunk with losers like you, I'd rather play games or read PC PowerPlay. And if I see you on the MS Gaming Zone, I'll hack you into bite-sized chunks and sell you as 'Budget' brand dog food.

Jetha Chan
Internet

Windows for winners

I noticed in the May (April) issue letters' section, yet another reader commenting on 'how stable his Mac is' etc.

Is it only me that understands why this is the case? So many people poo-poo the PCs because Windows is unstable and it sometimes crashes etc etc.

But! Apple writes its own O/S for proprietary hardware that they design themselves, which is one of the reasons we all are using PCs not Macs. Apple's short-sightedness told them to make all Apple hardware proprietary and not sell rights to anyone.

Windows, on the other hand, is written to run on as much and varied hardware as is physically possible and Microsoft do not have control over what version of drivers you run on your machine, or indeed, any control over the drivers that manufacturers actually ship with their respective hardware.

So please, before you all get into a big fight about it, think about the reasoning behind the question. There is no need to rag on Microsoft, I can assure you, without them, we absolutely wouldn't be where we are now. And no, I don't work for Microsoft or any other well-known company, I'm a self-employed, 30 year old Network Engineer.

Tim Armstrong
Email

OK readers, got that? Macs = bad, Microsoft = good. Follow this simple rule and your gaming life will be rich indeed. And so will Bill.

Goodnight everybody!

Why do some people always show their temper in online games like flooding the screen with bad 4 letter words and insults. For crying out loud, it's just a game!

Yun Khang Lai
Email

COMPETITIONS

6 COPIES OF MACHINES



It makes perfect sense to us that futuristic weapons will actually be self-aware mechanical entities with whopping great eyes. We view all our devices with such fondness, in fact.

Now there's a game that's got nothing at all to do with whatever the hell we're talking about. It's called Machines, is made by Acclaim and is reviewed on page 66 of this very issue. Can you believe it! Thanks to the generosity of Acclaim, and in particular Cameron, who, to our continued amazement, still lets us call him "Cammy Whammy", we've got this here competition. So go on, enter it.

Q. What's another name for "machine code"?

6 COPIES OF DESCENT 3



Corridor shooters are certainly the flavour of this month! The Descent series have a gaming heritage that is respected, nay, loved, by all who have... loved them in the past. As luck would have it, there's a review of this winner of a game on page 76. How about that!

We phoned Tim at Interplay and put the question to him. Later, trying to rebuild the friendship, we suggested that a competition could be a good PCPP/Interplay relationship-builder, incredibly, he agreed.

Q. How many 'Descent' games, including addons, have been released by Interplay?

6 COPIES OF EA'S CRICKET 99 + RICKY PONTING SIGNED PIC FOR THE GRAND PRIZE WINNER



Bats and balls and beer and blokes, or, if you're serious about your cricket, much more than this flippant and disrespectful list. That's cricket, we love it and so do you, we sense.

Well hey, there's a competition! Isn't that just fantastic! We've got a review of EA's Cricket World Cup 99, it's reviewed on page 70, a number we chose because it's well-rounded.

Ed at EA gave us the OK for this comp, so Ed, mate, thanks. It's a bit special too, as we've got a signed pic of Ricky Ponting for the Grand Prize winner, the 5 runners up get the game only, but what a game!

Q. Earlier this year Ricky Ponting visited the Bourbon and Beefsteak bar at Kings Cross, when he left, was it his left or right eye that was a shade darker?

6 COPIES OF REQUIEM



Read the review! Read the review! This game truly rocks, in case you haven't heard. It's funky and scary and futuristic and it's got guns and stuff, tremendous!

We would like to thank Natalie from Directsoft for this competition, but she was out when we called, so thanks to Ken, who isn't nearly as attractive, but is kind and polite nevertheless.

Q. List as many alternative names for the Devil as possible.

WHERE TO SEND

Write the answer, along with your name and address on the back of an envelope.

Tip #1: Don't forget to put the competition name on the front of the envelope. It saves us lots of hassles.

Tip #2: We don't actually open competition envelopes, so don't include a competition entry for every comp on a single piece of paper in one envelope. Although, if you answer multiple competitions on the back of one envelope, it will make the ecologically-aware staffers very happy.

All entries close July 12th

Send to:

<competition name>

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ISSUE 36 WINNERS:

CIVILIZATION: CALL TO POWER

M Baczyk, Christies Beach, SA
B Johnson, Hazelwood South VIC
W Crossley, Doonside NSW
L De Iudicibus, South Lake WA
M Agosta, Werribee VIC
P Hansen, Duncraig WA

SILVER

E Warhurst, Gosford NSW
M Lai, Embleton WA
J Dando, Leura NSW
D McGirvan, Chelsea Heights VIC
H Dare-Edwards, Wagga Wagga NSW
A Leong, Kingsford NSW

CANON SCANNER

T Davidson, Randwick NSW

ROLLERCOASTER TYCOON

S Bristol, Carine WA
J Maslin, McKellar ACT
S Miller, Upper Lansdowne NSW
J Armellin, South Bruce ACT
L Wilkinson, Bacchus Marsh VIC
J Lowe, East Burwood VIC

read error >

It's true.

Eating yer brussel sprouts sends you stark raving mad.

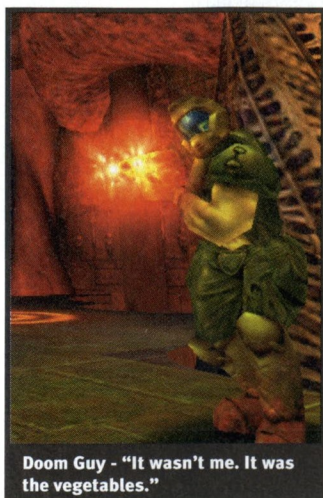
As the investigations continue into last month's tragic school shooting in Colorado, some disturbing revelations have recently come to light. After countless lengthy interviews with the parents of the perpetrators, the FBI have uncovered the following startling facts:

* The two boys apparently both slept, tucked up at home in their own beds, for anywhere between six and ten hours each night, while their oblivious parents did likewise in the very next room.

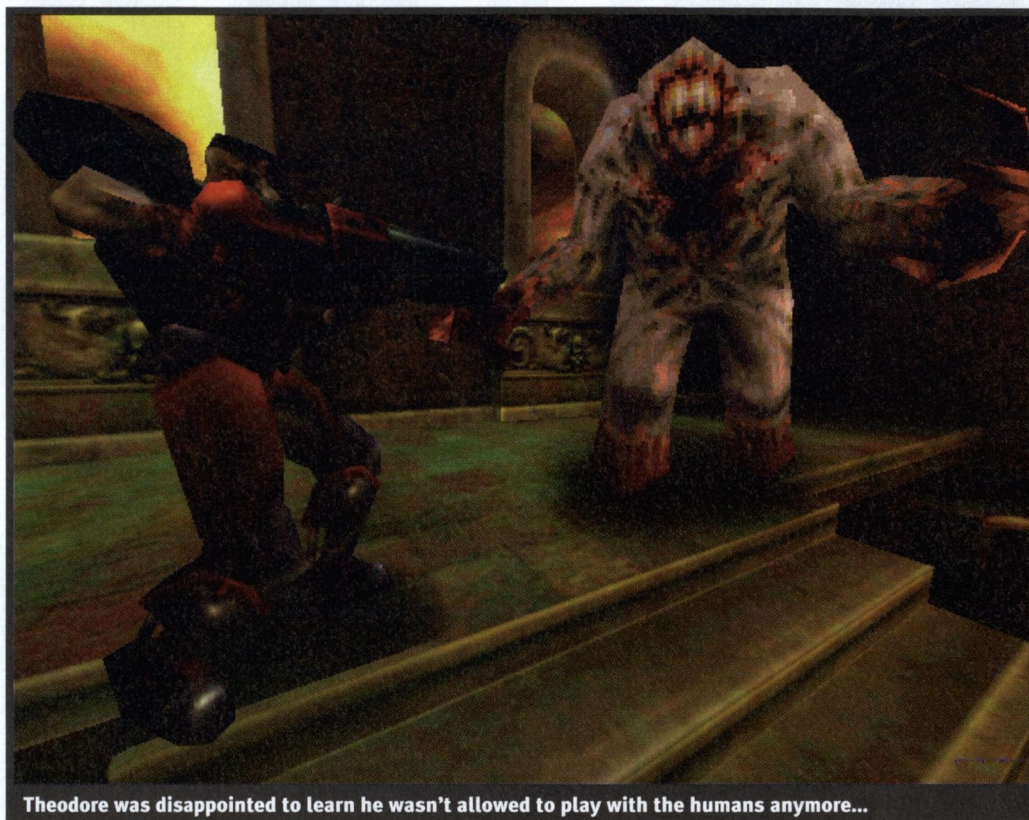
* One of the duo regularly caught the same local bus on his way to school in the morning, reversing his schedule in the afternoons perhaps in an attempt to cover his tracks.

* For most of his seventeen years, the other boy consistently dined on an evening meal containing at least one serving of meat and several vegetables (often one green and one yellow).

In response to these findings, US President Clinton has warned the nation's parents to closely monitor their child's sleeping patterns and eating habits and to take appropriate measures against such seemingly normal activities that could be construed as deviant. As a further precaution, the Colorado Transport Authority has cancelled the 8.17am bus to Columbine High School.

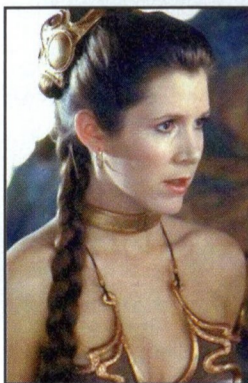


Doom Guy - "It wasn't me. It was the vegetables."



Theodore was disappointed to learn he wasn't allowed to play with the humans anymore...

First title of new Episode 1 "educational range" revealed.



Keen as they indubitably are to milk as much as possible from the now ubiquitous Episode One hype, we were still surprised to learn of the latest Star Wars title lined up by Lucasarts - Star Wars Strip Poker. When asked which charac-

ters would feature in the game, a Lucas spokesperson told us more than we wanted to know: "The game has various difficulty levels. For example, the easiest has you playing against Princess Leia as she's seen at the beginning of Return of the Jedi, since she's hardly wearing anything anyway. Keep winning and you'll be lucky enough to see several dozen characters from the Star Wars universe completely naked. To win the whole game, though, you'll have to beat Chewbacca."

What's so difficult about that?

"Well, he strips off hair by hair..."

All we can say is may the clothes always be with you.



Ask Abe...

In a new regular column, everyone's favourite Mudokon and Oddworld inhabitant, will endeavour each month to solve all your gaming related concerns. A philosopher of great renown, Abe can also draw upon many years of first-hand experience at the forefront of the games industry. So, if you have a question, then just Ask Abe...



Perceville Weathercock (of Hunters Hill, NSW) asks: "Dear Abe, I'm a Linguistics student researching my honours year thesis into the role of bodily functions in non-verbal communication and was wondering if you could use your vast flatulent knowledge to clarify a small matter for me. How do you spell a fart noise?"

Abe: "I don't know... Wait... Thfffffftt!! Hehehehe..."

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Prince of Persia vs Tomb Raider? We'd take the ponce in pygamas anyway.

Developer: Jordan Mechner/ Broderbund
Year: 1990
Requirements: 286, 4Meg RAM

When you've been playing games for as long as I have - and I really wouldn't like to be reminded of exactly how long it's been, nor would I appreciate any jokes about how tired I must be feeling - those once precious memorable moments start getting easier and easier to forget. For something to stay with me for nearly ten years, it clearly must have been extra special. Yet that is what Prince Of Persia has done. My reaction the very first time I played it remains indelibly imprinted in my mind. I simply couldn't believe that a PC was capable of such incredible animation. The Prince moved so beautifully, so fluidly, so realistically, that the only conceivable response was to gasp in sheer awe. It's truly one of the all time greats.

Throughout the 80s, the PC was considered anathema to action gaming due to, amongst other factors, its then inability to produce quality animation. But in 1990 that all changed. Here, as never before, we witnessed a game hero running and leaping and swordfighting in a fashion that left contemporary consoles for dead. How was this possible?



What kind of magic had creator Jordan Mechner summoned?

Actually, what he had done was take an age old animation technique pioneered in the 1920s by the Fleischer brothers (creators of the Betty Boop and Popeye cartoons). Using a device called the "rotoscope", animators were able to film an actor performing various movements and then trace his outline in each frame of footage. As you might imagine, the end result was astonishingly lifelike hand-drawn animation. Mechner had used this technique, albeit to less impressive effect, in his first game, the martial arts



adventure Karateka. But, only a couple of years later, he perfected it with the hugely successful Prince Of Persia.

At heart, POP was basically a platform game. Each screen consisted of three levels of platforms replete with gaps to jump and crumbling sections to avoid or dislodge. Spike traps littered the walkways ready to impale the careless player, while guillotine-style jaws of death were more than capable of chomping the Prince in half. Amid the daredevil action, the desperate leap to grab a platform by the fingertips or the sprint under a portcullis mere seconds before it closed, were many nail-biting duels with the palace guards. With only a few moves the combat may have seemed simple, but the imple-



mentation was spot on. The subsequent stand-offs as you and your foe waited for the other to make the first (wrong) move were as tense as gaming can get. Probably the only other PC game to get close to matching POP in this regard is Adeline's dazzling Time Commando.

Even today Prince Of Persia provides an immense challenge. More importantly, it captures the imagination just as easily as it did all those years ago.

David Wildgoose

So you want polygons...?

For anyone who missed out on this superb game upon its original release, there's still enough time to save the princess from the evil Jaffar. Red Orb have a new collector's edition now available containing Prince Of Persia 1 & 2 as well as a rather nice movie detailing the making of the forthcoming Prince Of Persia 3D. Pleasingly, in this third episode, the animation appears on track to be just as exceptional as the earlier games, despite the move into 3D forcing the abandonment of the rotoscoped method. In fact, no form of motion capture will be seen in the game at all, with development effort instead concentrating on skeletal animation technologies. We'll have significantly more information on that particularly exciting game next issue once we've returned from May's E3 Show in LA.





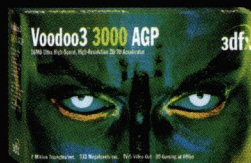
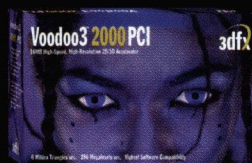
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